CALIFORNIA

A VINDICATION

OF THE

CHARACTER AND ADMINISTRATION

OF

SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD,

BART., GOVERNOR OF MADRAS IN 1778-1780,

FROM THE MISREPRESENTATIONS OF COLONEL WILKS, MR. MILL, AND OTHER HISTORIANS OF BRITISH INDIA:

INCLUDING AN

EXAMINATION OF MR. HASTINGS' RELATIONS WITH SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD.

BY HIS DAUGHTER, THE LATE

ELIZABETH ANNE RUMBOLD.

LONDON:

LONGMANS, GREEN, READER, AND DYER.

1868.

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"EXORIARE aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor."—ÆNEID.

"HE that goes about to persuade multitudes that they are not so well informed as they ought to be, in things generally received and deeply rooted, shall never want impatient hearers. Because men's natural inclinations are more prone to rest upon what they have already embraced, and what for a long time hath had no opposition, than to be curious in the search after the truth thereof; though it be the truth."—HOOKER.

HENRY MORSE STEPHENS

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ERRATA.

Omit "Note 1," in the Foot-Note on p. 9.

Throughout Chapter VII., (pp. 74–79,) and at p. 266, read *Sadleir* for *Sadlier*.

On p. 130, for *Cailland* read *Caillaud.*

On p. 167, for *Nizam at Mulck* read *Nizam ul Mulck.*

On page 234, for *Ganzam* read *Ganjam.*

PREFACE.

The Vindication contained in this volume has a remarkable and pathetic history.

The late Sir Thomas Rumbold, who died in 1791, was the father of a large family. His youngest daughter, the author of this vindication, died, a year ago last January, at an advanced age, leaving behind her the substance of the following pages. What was needed was, that they should be arranged and edited; and circumstances left the editor no option but to undertake the work, although he did so with the greatest reluctance, because of the severe pressure upon him of other duties, and because he was destitute of the preliminary knowledge as to the details of the history of British India in the last century, which the task of editing Miss Rumbold's papers demanded.

It was not many years before her death that Miss Rumbold became aware of the extent to which her father's reputation had been darkened by the imputations of successive historians of Indian affairs, from the date of Colonel Wilks's "Historical Sketches of the South of India," * downwards to the present time. Miss Rumbold was at this time a resident in France, and had been for many years in a very frail condition

* Vol. ii., 1817.

of health. As she became more and more acquainted, however, with the subject, her feelings became proportionately interested in it. She was determined at least to understand the actual merits of the case, and to know whether her father deserved the obloquy which had been heaped upon him. If he was indeed, contrary to all her own family traditions, a corrupt and tyrannical man, if he had been a mercenary and flagitious ruler, she would know the worst. If, on the contrary, he had been maligned, notwithstanding her physical feebleness and her advanced age, she would see what might be accomplished, in order to vindicate the character of her father. By the diligent researches, accordingly, of her nephew, Mr. C. J. A. Rumbold, she obtained, in addition to such authorities as were generally known to Indian students, an immense mass of original evidence in relation to Sir Thomas Rumbold's administration of Madras in 1778–1780, and to Indian affairs in general during the latter half of the last century. In particular she obtained, what not one of the standard historians of Indian affairs, who have pronounced condemnation on Sir Thomas Rumbold, seems to have been at the pains to study, and what, of the critics or commentators on the histories, Professor Wilson alone appears to have consulted, the "Minutes of the Evidence taken at the Bar of the House of Commons, on the Hearing of Counsel on the Second Reading of the Bill for inflicting certain Pains and Penalties on Sir Thomas Rumbold," &c. These Minutes afford conclusive evidence against

the chief and staple charges which have been handed down from historian to historian; and leave no room to wonder that Mr. Dundas found it convenient to let the Bill drop after the second reading, when Sir Thomas Rumbold's defence was completed. With this volume not beyond reach, it is very remarkable that such a historian as Mr. Mill should, without any reference to its contents, that is, to the real evidence on the case, have taken his representation of Sir Thomas Rumbold from the accusations of the Bill of Pains and Penalties, that is, from the indictment, which was confessedly one-sided, and partook also of the nature of a partisan attack, and should even have repeated and given permanency to charges which were so contrary to evidence, that the prosecutors of Sir Thomas Rumbold found themselves compelled to abandon them at an early stage of the prosecution.

Miss Rumbold also obtained possession of a copy in manuscript of the speech of Mr. Bearcroft before the House, on opening the case on the part of the prosecution against Sir Thomas Rumbold.

She was fortunate enough to obtain, in two large and closely written folio volumes, the Briefs prepared for the Counsel to oppose the Bill on behalf of Sir Thomas Rumbold; besides which, Mr. Hardinge's speech in defence of his client, Sir Thomas,* and the manly and dignified defence published by the accused himself, for private circulation, were secured by Miss Rumbold. To complete her knowledge of the whole period, she

* Published by Robinson, Payne, and Son, &c. London, 1783.

procured and mastered the very voluminous and valuable Reports of the Committee of Secrecy of the House of Commons on the Causes of the War in the Carnatic. From the British Museum and elsewhere she obtained copies of correspondence between Sir Thomas Rumbold and Sir Philip Francis, (then Mr. Francis,) and between Sir Thomas and Sir Eyre Coote. Mr. Francis' Diary was also studied. Many scarce tracts on Indian affairs were laid under contribution. All the histories of India, the Lives of Hastings and Burke, Hansard's Parliamentary History, and, in a word, whatever could have any bearing, one way or the other, on the merits of Sir Thomas Rumbold's administration, were closely investigated: until Miss Rumbold knew that she had all the evidence before her which could relate to the matters she had so much at heart. Six years of assiduous labour were thus given by the daughter to the work of laying open the truth respecting her father's Indian government.

The result is to be found in the pages following. Miss Rumbold became convinced of her father's innocence of the grave offences which had been laid to his charge. How the charges originated, and how and why her father was devoted as a victim and a scapegoat, to avert from others the storm of popular indignation, she believed herself able to show. But she was alone. She had outlived her early acquaintances; she had been long resident in a foreign land; and she had no connexion with the literary world. She left France and came to this country five years

ago, bent upon the prosecution of the task of duty she had assigned herself, but unable to discover how her work could be accomplished. In the latter part of 1866, she had completed her collections; she had got her argument into something like form; but she was without a literary adviser, and she felt the great disadvantage under which she laboured from her want of training as an author. She craved the judgment of some competent person as to the conclusiveness and effect of what she had prepared, and also instruction and aid in putting her materials into the best form for publication. By the advice of the present writer, she took her manuscript to Mr. Marshman, the Indian publicist and historian, who kindly consented to examine what she had collected and written. It so happened that Mr. Marshman had just completed, and was bringing through the press, the first volume of his History of India, in which he had followed the general stream of authorities in condemnation of Sir Thomas Rumbold. Miss Rumbold's work, however, changed his views. As it was too late to alter his text, he added an Appendix, in which he did not hesitate to confess himself convinced by the evidence which Miss Rumbold had adduced; in which he said that the chapter of Indian history relating to Sir Thomas Rumbold would have to be re-written; and expressed his judgment that the valuable matter contained in Miss Rumbold's papers ought to be given to the world. Mr. Marshman's Appendix is printed in this volume as a sequel to the Introductory Notice of

Sir Thomas Rumbold's history, which follows this Preface, and immediately before the Vindication itself.

Such a testimony from perhaps the highest living authority as to Indian history was decisive; and could not but be a reward to Miss Rumbold for all the labour she had undergone in her work of filial duty. But, when she read Mr. Marshman's Appendix, fresh from the first issue of the volume in which it is contained, she was already under the hand of death. The severe cold of January, 1867, had taken hold of her. On the last day but one of January, she read for herself, ill as she was, Mr. Marshman's Appendix. The day following she died. She felt as if she had done her work. Some of her last directions related to corrections in her manuscript.

In conformity with her own desire, and at the urgent request of her family and friends, the Editor felt constrained to accept the task of preparing her papers for the press. They were not fit to put into the hands of any professional reader or corrector. There was necessity for much revision, sometimes for omission, sometimes for re-arrangement, sometimes for the addition of a word or a clause to make the sense clear and complete. And the whole had to be divided into chapters. A merely professional man and an entire stranger could not well be entrusted with all this responsibility. There were, besides, many pages of matter toward the end of her collections, relating to the question of Sir Thomas and the Zemindars, and to Mr. Whitehill's relations with Mr. Hastings, and a

good deal also of Mr. Hardinge's Defence, about the publication of which, whether in whole or in part, she was doubtful, although she had put them in writing. It was felt that a friend only ought to be entrusted with the editorial responsibility, in a case which included so wide and serious a discretion.

The Editor has done his best. Perpetual interruptions from a multiplicity of other engagements, and an entire want of previous familiarity with the matters of history involved, have made it difficult for him to bring his work to a satisfactory conclusion.

Moreover, he felt that the Vindication was to be Miss Rumbold's, not his own. Hence, he has considered himself as bound to alter only where alteration was necessary. He was to leave Miss Rumbold's style and matter to make their own impression. Much more might have been made, by a practised writer, of many points, than has been done by Sir Thomas Rumbold's daughter. Miss Rumbold made no attempt at elaboration or at rhetoric; she desired only to set down a plain unvarnished statement of facts. She felt too deeply, and was too inexperienced a writer, to attempt to put her feelings into words, or to deal with her father's case as an advocate, or an orator, or even as a trained writer of history, would have done.

Notwithstanding, there are the facts, there is the history, to speak for itself. If Miss Rumbold lacked literary experience, she did not lack mental power. Her mastery of the whole subject, and, indeed, of the whole

web of Indian history, with its special subtleties and mysterious intricacies, during the period with which her father's history and administration stood in relation, was quite wonderful, as well as the acuteness of her investigations. This volume will be found to throw new light on the character and tactics of Mr. Hastings. The history of the origin of the war in the Carnatic must now be revised.*

The Editor must add, that the special authorities on which Miss Rumbold relied will be deposited in the British Museum, for use by future historians.

* Miss Rumbold belonged, on her mother's side, to a family distinguished for learning and mental ability. Her maternal grandfather was Dr. Edmund Law, Bishop of Carlisle. Two of her mother's brothers were Bishops respectively of the sees of Elphin and of Bath and Wells. She was a niece of the first Lord Ellenborough, and was, of course, a cousin of the present Earl.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

OF

SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD.

Sir Thomas Rumbold was born in January, 1736, at Leytonstone, in Essex. He was the youngest son of Mr. W. Rumbold, of the East India Company's Naval Service, whose father, of the same name, had also been in the service of the East India Company. The Rumbolds traced their descent from a family anciently of Essex, but in later times settled at Fulham.

From the year 1709, it appears from the records of the India House, that several of the family were in the civil service of the Company. Sir Thomas' elder brother, Lieutenant William Rumbold, is distinguished by Mr. Orme, in his "History of India," as having, on more than one occasion during his short career, rendered military and political service to the Company.

At the age of sixteen, Thomas Rumbold was appointed a writer to Fort St. George. There are now in the India House the regular certificates of studies qualifying him for the post. He soon changed the civil for the military line, and was allowed to retain his rank in the former service. He was present at the siege of Trichinopoly, and at the retaking of Calcutta, in 1756, where an act of remarkable intrepidity caused him to be promoted to a captaincy by Lord Clive, to whom he acted as *aide-de-camp* at Plassey. Seriously wounded in that battle, he was unable any longer to bear the fatigues of military service, and resumed his

position in the civil department. By Lord Clive he was called from Madras, to take his seat in the Council of Bengal, where he remained for five years. He also held the lucrative and important post of chief of Patna.

Having made a handsome, although by no means a colossal or extraordinary, fortune, and having at the same time suffered such exhaustion of health as commonly attends a residence of many years in such climates as those of Madras and Bengal, Mr. Rumbold returned to England about the year 1769.* In 1770 he entered Parliament, as Member for Shoreham. At this time his character and services were highly esteemed at the India House; and he was named as the successor of Hastings, when the Directors were determined upon his recall in 1773. This is a fact not to be lost sight of in investigating the causes of that jealousy of Sir Thomas Rumbold on the part of Mr. Hastings, the existence of which is proved incontestably by the Diary of Mr. (Sir Philip) Francis, and was very manifest in the conduct of the Governor-General towards Sir Thomas during his Presidency at Madras.

In 1777–8, Mr. Rumbold was sent out to succeed Lord Pigot at Madras. During his administration, Pondicherry and Mahé were taken from the French by Sir Hector Munro. For the taking of Pondicherry Mr. Rumbold received the special thanks of the Directors, and was created a Baronet. During his administration he differed frequently from Mr. Hastings as to ques-

* He had visited England for his health once in the interval, in the years 1762–3.

tions of Indian policy; and in particular he repeatedly and pointedly condemned the policy of the Mahratta war, which, in his view, as in that of Mr. Francis, led immediately to the war in the Carnatic.

In 1780, Sir Thomas Rumbold was obliged to resign his office, and leave Madras, because of his broken health, which threatened speedily fatal consequences, unless relieved by an immediate return to Europe. He set sail from Madras on the 6th of April; and, on his arrival in England, found the Directors incensed against him. He had not only offended Mr. Hastings, but some of the civil servants of the Company who had returned to England, or who had friends in this country. Especially had he given umbrage, both at home and abroad, by some salutary reforms which he had carried out, which struck at the emolument and consequence of the local boards, or "subordinacies," as they were sometimes called, and which also, by reducing the value of patronage, sensibly affected the interests of the patrons at home.

At this time, moreover, general indignation had risen high against the profligacy, real or imagined, of our Indian Government, against the whole class of Indian nabobs, as monsters of corruption or oppression, who had gained enormous fortunes by the foulest misdeeds. Only a few years before this the great Clive had had to suffer the deepest humiliation as the representative of Indian policy and of Indian profligacy. Five and twenty years later, by a not unrighteous retribution,

Mr. Hastings was to drink of the same cup of bitterness to its dregs, in an agony of mortification and abasement, protracted through years. Lord Macaulay's words set forth, with a vividness and power which another writer could not hope to rival, the condition of the public mind as to the rulers of India.

"The unfortunate nabob seemed to be made up of those foibles against which comedy has pointed the most merciless ridicule, and of those crimes which have thrown the deepest gloom over tragedy, of Turcaret and Nero, of Monsieur Jourdain and Richard the Third. A tempest of execration and derision, such as can be compared only to that outbreak of public feeling against the Puritans at the time of the Restoration, burst on the servants of the Company. The humane man was horrorstruck at the way in which they had got their money; the thrifty man at the way in which they had spent it. The Dilettanti sneered at their want of taste. The Macaroni blackballed them as vulgar fellows. Writers, the most unlike in sentiment and style, Methodists and libertines, philosophers and buffoons, were for once on the same side. It is hardly too much to say, that during a space of about thirty years, the whole lighter literature of England was coloured by the feelings which we have described. Foote brought on the stage an Anglo-Indian chief, dissolute, ungenerous, tyrannical, ashamed of the humble friends of his youth; hating the aristocracy, yet childishly eager to be numbered among them; squandering his wealth on panders and flatterers, tricking out his

chairman with the most costly hothouse flowers, and astounding the ignorant with his jargon about rupees, lacs, and jaghires. Mackenzie, with more delicate humour, depicted a plain country family raised by the Indian acquisitions of one of its members to sudden opulence, and exciting derision by an awkward mimicry of the manners of the great. Cowper, in that lofty expostulation which glows with the very spirit of the Hebrew poets, placed the oppression of India foremost in the list of those national crimes for which God had punished England with years of disastrous war, with discomfiture in her own seas, and with the loss of her Transatlantic empire. If any of our readers will take the trouble to search in the dusty recesses of circulating libraries for some novel published sixty years ago, the chance is that the villain or sub-villain of the story will prove to be a savage old nabob, with an immense fortune, a tawny complexion, a bad liver, and a worse heart." *

Moreover, in 1780, within a few months after Sir Thomas Rumbold returned to England, the nation broke into wrath about Indian Affairs, upon a very special provocation which had just come to light, and wanted, before all else, "some one to hang." The Mahratta war had been full of mismanagement; the war in the Carnatic had just broken out. The Directors had committed themselves to the former war, and in general to the policy of Mr. Hastings. While the

* Essay on Lord Clive.

nation demanded a victim and a sacrifice, the Company needed a scape-goat. Sir Thomas Rumbold was made the victim, and on him the indignation of the nation was directed. He was sacrificed for the misdoings of the Directors. He was held up to popular odium, as one who had not rendered needful help in the Mahratta war, and whose high-handed and impolitic administration at Madras had precipitated the war in the Carnatic. How far these imputations were well-founded, will appear in the course of this volume. His friends maintained that the Mahratta war was altogether ill-advised and calamitous; that that war was in effect the main cause of the war in the Carnatic; and that Sir Thomas Rumbold was absolutely prevented by Mr. Hastings' neglect at one time, and interference and coercion at another, from taking the steps which he desired to take, in preparation for the contingency of a war with Hyder Ali, which he had throughout clearly seen, and against which he was continually warning Mr. Hastings to prepare.

The history of the prosecution to which Sir Thomas Rumbold, like Lord Clive before him, and Mr. Hastings afterwards, was subjected on his return to England, is given by Miss Rumbold in some of the opening chapters of this volume. It is sufficient here to note that, having sent in his resignation previous to his leaving Madras in April, 1780, and having reached England towards the autumn of the same year, Sir Thomas Rumbold was formally censured and dismissed by the East India Company in January, 1781;

that, in April of that year, the calamitous war in the Carnatic became the subject of discussion in the House of Commons, with a view to a full inquiry, in which discussion (April 27th) Sir Thomas Rumbold, who had taken his seat as Member for Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, having been made the object of certain insinuations by Mr. T. Townshend, spoke at some length, giving his views as to the extent of ground which a thorough inquiry should cover, and courting the fullest investigation; that on the 9th of April in the following year, (1782,) Mr. Dundas opened the case against the Indian authorities, and in particular against Sir Thomas Rumbold, by a speech, in which he moved for a Committee of the whole House on Indian Affairs; that after this, in due course, certain Resolutions upon Indian Affairs, and especially a series relating to the administration of Madras, passed the House, (April 29th,) upon which a Bill of Pains and Penalties against Sir Thomas Rumbold, and other members of the Madras Council, was founded; that a Bill to restrain Sir Thomas Rumbold and Mr. Perring from leaving the kingdom was also brought in, and passed the Committee, after its Second Reading, on the 3rd of May of the same year; that after an interval of nine months, that is to say, in February, 1783, the prosecution was opened, and the defence closed on the last day of May following; and that the Bill was abandoned on June 2nd of the same year, after but one debate; at which it was evident that the feeling of the House in the matter was very materially changed.

Sir Thomas retained his seat in Parliament; took part in discussions relating to Indian Affairs, was

listened to with respect, and, as is shown in this volume, was publicly spoken of by Mr. Burke in such a way as proved that his character and position in the House were restored. In his own circle, and during his lifetime, the voice of calumny seems to have been silenced. Nor was it until more than a quarter of a century after his death, when Colonel Wilks, writing under the inspiration of Mr. Hastings, published his History of Affairs in the South of India, that the accusations of the Directors and of Mr. Dundas's Committee were revived.

The following letter from Sir Thomas Rumbold to Lord North accompanied a copy of the Baronet's Defence, as published (in part) by himself.

"My Lord,

"After the very polite reception I received from your Lordship, on my first arrival, it may appear extraordinary that I have for some time deferred paying my compliments to you; it has, my Lord, arose from a point of delicacy, for I find it absolutely necessary in the first instance to vindicate the measures of my administration abroad, against the violent attack that has been made upon them. The slow progress of inquiry has unavoidably held me in a very disagreeable situation, and not only prevented me from offering my sentiments on the state of India in general, and the regulations that were necessary to be adopted, but has obliged me to act with great reserve till my conduct has undergone a thorough investigation, and I am either condemned or set at

liberty to act with independence and freedom. I take the liberty of enclosing to your Lordship the first attempt I have made to enter into a justification of myself; if it should merit your Lordship's perusal, I doubt not but you will find it is founded on facts; and I will venture to assert that the subsequent chapters will afford as strong a vindication on the several points on which they break as the one now offered on a measure that has been reprobated not because it was in itself bad, but because it was likely to impress the public with an idea of peculations, and to raise a prejudice in order to answer particular purposes. I have the honour to be with great respect,

"My Lord,

"Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

"THOMAS RUMBOLD.

"*New Cavendish Street, March* 11*th*, 1782."

All Sir Thomas Rumbold's addresses in the House, the tone of the Defence itself, his silence in the House during the time his conduct was under investigation, and whatever else is known of him, are in agreement with the delicacy and dignity of feeling expressed in this letter. If, from 1784 onwards, he felt himself at liberty to take his full share in the discussions on Indian Affairs in the House of Commons, and if, when he had spoken, his words were marked by the commendation of such a man as Burke, the reason was that his moral influence was restored. In the extracts from Mr. Burke's speech on the Debts of the Nabob of Arcot, given on pp. 29–31, and in a supplementary note

on p. 351, it will be seen how vastly more severe is Mr. Burke's condemnation of Mr. Dundas than any censure to which he had thought Sir Thomas Rumbold at any time liable, and how highly he praises the Baronet's conduct during the course of the Parliamentary investigation.

It may here be added that Sir Thomas Rumbold was elected M.P. for Weymouth, in 1784, and sat for that borough till his death in 1791. He left issue by both his first and second wife. Sir Arthur Rumbold, Governor of Tortola, descended from the first wife, is his great-grandson, and inherits the title. Miss Rumbold, the author of the following pages, was the youngest of three daughters by the second marriage, and sister to the late Charles Edmund Rumbold, for many years M.P. for Great Yarmouth.

Posterity has often modified, has sometimes reversed, the judgment pronounced on character by contemporaries; later history has very often set aside the less thoroughly informed conclusions of history written too near the time of the actors to escape from the bias of partiality or the cast of prejudice. In the present case, although it is not to be supposed that Sir Thomas Rumbold's administration will be proved to have been altogether free from errors of judgment, it cannot be doubted that he will have to be instated among the ranks, of not only able, but also honourable, administrators in our Indian Empire. He was not unworthy to be the friend of Clive, and to have been put in nomination for the Governor-Generalship of India.

APPENDIX TO VOL. I. OF MARSHMAN'S "HISTORY OF BRITISH INDIA."

(LONGMANS. 1867.)

PROCEEDINGS OF SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD, GOVERNOR OF MADRAS, IN 1778, 1779, AND 1780.

SINCE this volume was sent to press, the author has been favoured with a large and valuable collection of papers, compiled from original correspondence, and from printed records long since forgotten, relative to the administration of Sir Thomas Rumbold, at Madras, and intended to relieve his memory from the obloquy which has rested on it for nearly half a century. A careful perusal of this compilation forces the conclusion that the charges brought against him by Colonel Wilks and Mr. Mill were based on erroneous information, and partial investigation. The statements regarding his proceedings, which are now received as historical facts, and the authenticity of which the author of this volume never suspected, are not, as it would appear, to be relied on, and this chapter of Indian history requires to be written afresh. The interests of historical truth demand this candid admission, and render it necessary to place before the reader the clear explanations which these documents afford, of various points on which his conduct has been impeached.

The large sums remitted to England by Sir Thomas Rumbold, soon after his arrival at Madras, have been considered a decisive proof of the corrupt character of his proceedings. But these papers explain that he was for twelve years a civilian on the Bengal establishment, and chief of the factory of Patna,

and moreover engaged, like all the civilians of the time, in mercantile transactions; that the remittances consisted of the property he had left in Bengal in the public securities, as proved by the clearest evidence, and which, combined with his salary as Governor, fully accounted for the fortune he had accumulated, of which he was obliged on his return to deliver a schedule on oath, under the penalty of the confiscation of his entire property, if he erred to the extent of £500.

The Court of Directors had directed five of the members of Council at Madras to proceed to the northern Circars, to complete a settlement with the Zemindars, and Sir Thomas Rumbold has been censured for cancelling the Commission, and directing the Zemindars to repair to Madras, where they were required to transact business with him alone. But it is now shown that, for this procedure, he submitted his reasons to the Court of Directors, the chief of which was that these landholders were endeavouring to baffle the Commissioners, and that the Court declared themselves perfectly satisfied with the course he had adopted. When the matter came under Parliamentary investigation, it was attested by four witnesses that, at the Madras Presidency, transactions of this nature had always been conducted by the President himself, and subsequently communicated to the Board.

Regarding the bribe of a lac of rupees to his Secretary, Mr. Redhead, by Seetaram Raj, it is shown that Mr. Redhead never enjoyed the confidence of Sir Thomas, and was dismissed within a few months of his arrival at Madras, and died soon after. A paper was discovered among his effects, which purported to be a translation from the original, in the Gentoo language, containing a promise on the part of Seetaram Raj to pay him a lac of rupees, on the performance of certain services. It was not attested by Seetaram, or by Mr. Redhead. His executors, however, sued the native for the amount in the Mayor's Court, and obtained a Decree, which was reversed on appeal by the President in Council. An attempt was made to implicate Sir Thomas in the odium of this transaction, but the Counsel for the Bill found that it could not be sustained, and abandoned the charge.

It is stated in the histories of India, that when Sir Thomas summoned the Zemindars of the Northern Circars to Madras, Viziram Raj, the Zemindar of Vizagapatam, declined to obey the injunction, pleading the injury which his estates would suffer from his absence, but that his brother Seetaram Raj hastened thither, and succeeded in obtaining from Sir Thomas Rumbold the entire command of the Zemindary, in spite of his brother's remonstrances. The version of this affair given in these papers, and substantiated by documentary evidence, presents it in a totally different aspect. Seetaram was the eldest son, and the lawful heir of the Principality, but, under the pressure of palace intrigues, was induced to relinquish his right to his brother, and to consent to act as his Dewan, or Steward; in which capacity he managed the estates with such fidelity and benefit, as in a few years to double the rent-roll. A competitor at length succeeded in poisoning the mind of Viziram Raj against his brother, and supplanted him in his office. Seetaram was at Madras, seeking the intervention of the public authorities before the arrival of Sir Thomas, who determined, if possible, to reconcile the brothers. The new Dewan, who was a defaulter to the extent of £90,000, was directed to proceed to the Zemindary, and bring up his accounts. Sir Thomas embraced the opportunity of his absence, which relieved Viziram from the spell of his influence, to make up the family quarrel. Seetaram was re-appointed Dewan, and continued to live in harmony with his brother, and secured the punctual payment of the public revenue, and promoted the improvement of the family property.

The most important series of events elucidated by these documents, is that which refers to the transfer of the Guntoor Circar; which has been assumed, without question, as the cause of the confederacy formed to exterminate the Company, and of the war with Hyder Ali, which spread desolation through the Carnatic. The statement, which has hitherto been deemed authentic, runs thus:—By the Treaty made with the Nizam, in 1768, a tribute of seven lacs of rupees a year was to be paid to him for the four Circars, and he was bound to consider the ene-

mies of the Company his enemies. The Guntoor Circar, however, was to remain in the possession of his brother, Basalut Jung, during his life, and then to revert to the Company; but if he gave protection or assistance to their enemies, they were at liberty to take possession of the province, and retain it. Basalut Jung employed Monsieur Lally to organize an army, commanded by French officers, which was gradually increased to five hundred Europeans and three thousand Sepoys, and was constantly supplied with recruits and stores through the port of Motapilly. In 1779, Basalut Jung, alarmed by the encroachment of Hyder, voluntarily proposed to Sir Thomas Rumbold to lease his territory for its full value to the Company, to dismiss the French force, and to receive a British contingent in its stead. A British force was accordingly sent to take possession of the province, and Mr. Hollond was deputed to Hyderabad to explain this transaction to the Nizam, and to demand the remission of the tribute, which had been withheld for some time. The Nizam was exasperated at a proceeding which he considered a breach of the Treaty, and immediately formed a confederacy with the Mahrattas and Hyder for the extermination of English power in the Deccan. These measures were concealed from Mr. Hastings, who, on becoming cognizant of them, superseded the authority of the Madras Government at the Court of the Nizam, ordered the province to be restored, and engaged to make good the tribute; and, by this prompt and conciliatory procedure, detached him from the great Confederacy.

The documents now collected give a totally different aspect to these transactions. The collection of a French force in Guntoor had been an object of alarm equally at Calcutta and at Madras for years before the Confederacy was formed. In July, 1775, the Governor-General stated that no time should be lost in removing it, and authorized the Government of Madras to march a body of troops to the frontier, to demand the immediate dismissal of the French force; and, if it was not complied with, to take possession of the country and retain it. The Government of Madras, instead of adopting this extreme measure, sent a remonstrance to the Nizam, as Soobadar of the

Deccan, and urged the removal of the French corps. He promised to respect the Treaty "to a hair's breadth," but constantly evaded compliance with the demand, which was often repeated. The capture of Pondicherry, in 1778, gave a new turn to affairs in the Deccan; and, combined with the recent encroachments of Hyder, who threatened to absorb the Guntoor Circar likewise, induced Basalut Jung to send a Vakeel to Madras, and offer to make over the province to the Company on the payment of the same sum which he had hitherto derived from it, to dismiss the French, and receive an English force. A Treaty, embodying these arrangements, was accordingly drawn up by Sir Thomas Rumbold, with the full concurrence of Sir Eyre Coote, then a member of the Madras Council, and submitted to Mr. Hastings, who made divers alterations, and then returned it to be carried into effect, with his full concurrence. A detachment of British troops was then sent to occupy the province, who were obliged to cross a corner of a district which Hyder had recently added to his dominions. The Court of Directors likewise commended the meritorious conduct of Sir Thomas in concluding the Treaty.

The Nizam and Hyder resented this proceeding, but their indignation only served to demonstrate the wisdom and policy of it. The Nizam reproached his brother for having rented the Circar to the English, when he should have made it over to Hyder Ali. Hyder had resolved to oust Basalut Jung, and take possession of the province, which would give him a position on the flank of the Carnatic, and a port on the Coromandel coast. He was irritated by the promptness with which this design was frustrated, and vowed that he would not allow the Circar to pass into the hands of "his old and bitter enemies." By a singular error, accidental or otherwise, the word "enemy" was substituted for "enemies," and the declaration was thus made to apply to Mahomed Ali, the Nabob of the Carnatic, and not to the Company, whom Hyder always regarded with a feeling of rancorous hatred.

With regard to the tribute of seven lacs of rupees a year, the papers state that it had fallen into arrears before the arrival of

Sir Thomas Rumbold. The Nizam was pressing for payment, and the Madras Government had earnestly entreated the Governor-General to assist them with funds to discharge it. The Madras Presidency was reduced to such a state of poverty, that when the troops had been paid for one month, they knew not where to look for the next supply. Mr. Hollond was sent to Hyderabad, not to make a positive demand of remission, to be eventually supported by violence, but to solicit a reduction of the sum, on the plea of poverty; and, if the Nizam appeared to be propitious, to propose the entire relinquishment of it, coupled with certain propositions which it was thought would appear an equivalent for the sacrifice. If they were rejected, he was instructed to assure the Nizam that the current tribute, as well as the arrears, would be paid "as soon as they were in cash." Mr. Hollond found, on his arrival, that the Nizam had taken the French force dismissed by Basalut Jung into his own service; which, considering that the English were then at war with the French, was a gross breach of the Treaty, and the Governor of Madras strenuously remonstrated with the Nizam for openly protecting and encouraging the enemies of the Company. Mr. Hollond therefore informed him that the payment of the tribute would be made, on his giving full satisfaction regarding the French troops.

The hostile confederacy formed by the Nizam is attributed, by the historians, to the irritation produced in the mind of the Nizam by the Guntoor transactions and the tribute negotiations. But the documents show that it was formed before they had occurred, and that this fact was admitted by the Governor-General himself. The animosity of the Nizam, which led to the Confederacy, was created by the support given by the British Government to Raghoba, whom he considered his most inveterate enemy. He had earnestly remonstrated with the Bengal Government on this subject, and announced his determination to attack the Company's dominions if the alliance was not relinquished. Another cause of annoyance was the interception of a letter addressed by the Governor-General to Mr. Elliott, the envoy sent to Nagpore, authorizing him to conclude an alliance

with the Rajah, and to assist him in recovering certain territories from the Nizam. It is shown in the papers that it was these two transactions alone which induced the Nizam to form a combination against the Company. It has likewise been believed that the Nizam was detached from the Confederacy by the assurance of the Bengal Government that the tribute should be paid, and the Guntoor Circar restored; but a far more probable cause of this change of policy is to be found, so the papers say, in the fact that, while the Nizam was inciting Hyder to attack the English, he discovered that Hyder had sent a Vakeel to Delhi, to obtain from the puppet of an Emperor an imperial grant of the whole of the Nizam's dominions!

These documents deal also with the assertion that the Madras Government, after having given every provocation to Hyder, were taken by surprise when he burst on the Carnatic. But it is stated that every effort was made to conciliate him. The expedition to Mahé was undertaken by orders from home, but when it was found to be obnoxious to Hyder, Sir Thomas proposed that it should be suspended, but was overruled by Sir Eyre Coote. Hyder declared that he would be revenged for Mahé in the Carnatic. The Madras Council were fully aware of his hostility, and repeatedly pointed out the danger to which the Carnatic would be exposed from his assaults, and their inability to defend it. They recommended a union of all the Presidencies to reduce his power. In announcing Hyder's preparations to Calcutta, in November, 1779, Sir Thomas Rumbold stated that if he should enter the Carnatic, it was beyond their power to prevent the ravages of his horse; but, so late as January, 1780, Mr. Hastings wrote: "I am convinced from Hyder's conduct and disposition, that he will never molest us while we preserve a good understanding with him."

In reference to the desertion of his post on the eve of the war, and the resentment of the Court of Directors, the papers show that the measures of Sir Thomas Rumbold had been uniformly commended by them; and that the first censure of his conduct, which was also accompanied by a sentence of deposition, was written three months after they had received his

resignation, and appointed his successor; and that his retirement from India was rendered imperative by the advice of the first physicians in Madras. After his return, Mr. Dundas introduced a Bill of pains and penalties, charging him with high crimes and misdemeanours, and more particularly stigmatizing the transaction regarding the Guntoor Circar as having been done in a clandestine, treacherous, irregular, and unjustifiable manner. The law officers of the Crown condemned these proceedings as unjust. Some of the more important allegations in the Bill were abandoned, and others broke down when brought to the test of evidence; and the Bill itself was withdrawn twenty months after it had been presented, by a motion that it be read that day six months.

It is to be hoped that this valuable collection of documents will, at no distant period, be given to the public, for the information of those who take an interest in the history of British India, and the guidance of those who may hereafter treat of this subject.

CHAPTER I.

PREJUDICES LONG CURRENT AGAINST SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD. THE OCCASION AND ORIGIN OF THESE.

EIGHTY years have passed since Sir Thomas Rumbold was arraigned before the House of Commons, on the charge of grievous misconduct during the period of his administration in India. The circumstances of the case are little understood, if not altogether forgotten; and can therefore inspire little general interest. There may be some, however, to whom it has been matter of surprise, that, when all who have been placed in situations somewhat similar, have found in aftertimes warm friends and advocates to defend their cause, not one voice should have been raised to stem the torrent of abuse that is continually directed against the government and character of Sir Thomas Rumbold.

It is needless here to offer any explanation of this past neglect, but since, as things now are, it would seem that so long as a very eventful period of Indian history is remembered and

described, the name of Sir Thomas Rumbold will be held up to reprobation, and vilified by every succeeding writer, it is hoped that some attention will be granted to these pages.

They have been compiled from the only authentic records now existing, and with the object of giving a better understanding of this particular case. It will also be found that, in some respects, a new and truer light is thrown upon the portion of history in which he was an actor.

The authorities specially referred to, from which subsequent writers have borrowed the representations they give of these transactions, are the histories of Colonel Wilks and of Mr. Mill.

In the former, it is only the subjects of general historic interest, in which Sir Thomas Rumbold was concerned, that are dwelt upon, and in these he has been made subservient to a special purpose of the author. It will be shown that the circumstances under which Colonel Wilks has given his account of the transactions in question render it unworthy of credit.

It is more difficult to assign the motives that may have led Mr. Mill, who is, according to general opinion, a most respectable and faithful historian, to deal so unfairly with the circum-

stances of this case. In the manner of recounting the historical facts, as well as in his enumeration of the charges originally made, the same spirit of enmity towards Sir Thomas Rumbold prevails. Whether it is attributable to the same cause as that which so much incensed the Court of Directors, admits only of conjecture; but throughout it is rather they who are speaking, than an historian gathering the truth from independent and from all available sources.

In a late edition of this History by Professor Wilson, all the accusations set forth in the fourth chapter, vol. iv., with the concluding paragraph, are followed by this observation of the editor:—"The author does not appear to have been in possession of the Minutes of the Evidence, which was produced in justification of the Bill of Pains and Penalties introduced by Mr. Dundas:" and, from his own study of the evidence, Professor Wilson has made some important corrections of Mr. Mill's statements. Had he examined a little further he might have seen, not only that all these accusations were either placed in a very different light, or utterly disproved at the Bar of the House of Commons, but that *some of the charges made very prominent in Mr. Mill's History had been aban-*

*doned as untenable articles of the Bill of Pains and Penalties, before any evidence in support of them had been attempted on the part of the accusers.** But since Mr. Mill was ignorant or regardless of the evidence by which all the accusations were met, it is important to ask attention to a brief examination of the authorities to which he does himself refer. First, then, with regard to the judgment of the Court of Directors, cited by Mr. Mill, it may be observed, that the first censure ever addressed by them to Sir Thomas Rumbold, and which was accompanied by a sentence of banishment from the service, was dated three months after they had received his formal resignation, under circumstances explained by himself, which precluded his ever seeking further employment in the climate of India. This resignation had been formally acknowledged by the Directors, and two Courts were held, when Lord Macartney was appointed "successor to a resignation," yet the Proprietors were not informed that there existed any cause of displeasure against Sir Thomas Rumbold. This could not be deemed

* Mr. Mill has, in fact, reproduced the accusations against Sir Thomas Rumbold without, so far as appears, having even read any of the statements and evidence in reply.—EDITOR.

an accidental omission. The Directors knew that he had friends among the Proprietors who would have insisted upon canvassing the merits of any measure they might contemplate against him, and might have engaged a General Court to give it a fair consideration. The letter of resignation was dated the 15th of January, 1780, and was received on the 15th of September following.* When on the 20th of December, a few days before Sir Thomas Rumbold was expected to arrive in London, the Directors went through the mockery of dismissing him from a service which he had already relinquished, it was ostensibly for measures carried out at Madras, with every detail of which they had been acquainted for much above a twelvemonth, and at which they had testified no dissatisfaction; indeed that interval had been marked by the general thanks of the Company. Should it be objected that those thanks were for distinct services, reference may be made to the "Minutes

* "Minutes of the Evidence," p. 211. See also Barrow's "Life of Lord Macartney," vol. i., p. 71. "At a Court of Proprietors held on the 23rd of November, 1780, a letter from Sir Thomas Rumbold was read, wherein he declared his intention to resign his government; and notice was then given that on the 14th of December it was intended to proceed to nominate a successor."

of the Evidence,"* and to the Appendix to the Second Report of the Committee of Secrecy,† where it will be seen that the very measures relating to what was called the suspension of the Committee of Circuit, and to the treatment of the Zemindars, which were subsequently described as so obnoxious, and held up to the censure of Parliament, are commented upon approvingly in letters from the Directors; and the President and Council are recommended to persevere in the plans suggested for their relief from very long established grievances, which had involved them in almost hopeless debt. The Government, however, adopted the views of the Directors, a parliamentary inquiry was instituted to report upon Sir Thomas Rumbold's conduct, and a restraining Bill was enacted to make his property amenable to justice in Parliament.

How far it concurred with the political measures then in contemplation, to impress the House strongly with a sense of the misconduct of the servants of the Company, and to direct against Sir Thomas Rumbold, in particular, the indignation that had long been gathering in the public mind against the Company in general, is

* "Minutes of the Evidence," p. 245.

† Second Report, Appendix, No. 152.

a question that requires much insight into the politics of the times wholly to solve; but the result is obvious. There was a general determination to devote Sir Thomas Rumbold, and to this object truth and justice were alike sacrificed.*

Apart from any interest that may be felt for the vindication of a character that has been falsely aspersed, it is curious to observe the latitude which, in the years 1782 and 1783, persons who filled the most distinguished offices in the state allowed to themselves, in order to serve the purposes they had in view.

* Some clue to the causes of this proceeding may be found in these considerations. A renewal of the Charter was impending. The prosecution of Sir Thomas Rumbold appears to have been in furtherance of the object Mr. Fox's Bill had in view. The Government of Sir Thomas Rumbold was temporary, it being intended that Lord Pigot should resume his post; and he had a special mission to examine into the celebrated subject of the debts of the Nabob of Arcot. In these many interests were concerned. Some of the debts Sir Thomas Rumbold, in the view he took of the case, repudiated; and, on his first arrival at Madras, he interfered to refuse the sanction of Government to the ratification of a new loan of forty lacs that was in train of negotiation.—See Fourth Report, p. 686.

A great deal of jealousy on this subject was excited by anticipation; since hostile pamphlets were circulated before any accounts of Sir Thomas Rumbold's conduct could have reached England.

A very slight observation will make this so apparent, that Sir Thomas Rumbold needs scarcely any other acquittal beyond what is to be found in that portion of the Parliamentary Reports of the Committee of Secrecy which relates to him. The series of Resolutions laid before the House by Mr. Dundas professed to be founded upon the authentic documents supplied to the Committee by the Court of Directors; and although in this collection of documents much was suppressed essential to forming a right judgment in many cases on which the Committee was to pronounce, a comparison of the Reports with these documents (which were published as Appendices) will show, that in every instance they have either been garbled, or absolutely falsified, in passing through the hands of the Committee which drew up the Report, and on behalf of which Mr. Dundas presented his Resolutions.

It would exceed the necessary limits that must here be prescribed to point this out in every case; but in treating of the most prominent charges, sufficient examples will appear to prove the truth of what has been asserted. It will be found most obvious in those details which relate to the early accusations respecting the Zemindars, and therefore attention is entreated

to that subject, though it is one of little general interest.*

Of the sudden and hostile revolution of feeling, on the part of the Court of Directors, which has been described above, some explanation is given in the forcible language of Judge Hardinge, in the opening address of his "Defence of Sir Thomas Rumbold," where he also alludes to the manner of the proceedings in Parliament.

The address commences with this strong appeal against the commitment of the Bill:—"That it was neither just, nor wise, nor safe in the legislature to shut the courts of law against the party accused, and force him to that bar for his trial. ....Attainders are acts of real and urgent necessity: they never should be desecrated by the ruling power to the mischievous gratification of political resentment. Bills like these are endless inquisitions. The old acquittal of the law had words of comfort in it; '*Eat inde quietus*

* See note 1, Appendix to this volume, consisting of extracts from the "Answer to the Charges of the Directors, and the Reports of the Secret Committee, by Sir Thomas Rumbold himself." Of this only one part was printed and circulated, while the Reports were in progress,—in consequence of a denial in every quarter to afford him any opportunity of explanation. It may be seen in some public libraries, and in the British Museum.

sine die :' But here ordeal after ordeal persecutes the victim of suspicion : they are Bills of discovery, as well as of penalties ; *the calumny of the mob is inflamed, the character devoted, and a cold acquittal from guilt, or exemption from punishment, is no mercy to a good name dishonoured.*

"Why substitute a Bill of pains and penalties in place of an impeachment or any other legal proceeding ? Was this court preferred because no legal evidence could be found ? I am bold enough to affirm that I believe it was ; because I observe that illegal evidence forms many allegations of the Bill ; and we are told that every allegation criminates, and must be verified, be it ever so inapplicable by the rule of law to the terms of charge.* By such a doctrine, all the calumnies which malevolence can form, all the suspicions of an inquisitor, may be ingredients of this poisonous chalice, and Sir Thomas Rumbold must vindicate every passage of his life against them as well as he can.

"Yet, Sir, it is in the memory of those who

* How true a picture Mr. Hardinge has here drawn of the fate of Sir Thomas Rumbold under this Bill ! It is these allegations, as they came fresh from the hands of his accusers, that still pursue his character.

hear me, that I have, on the part of the accused, waived my protest against many articles of illegal evidence, illegal upon the first blush of them; I admit, however, that I embraced this line of conduct with pleasure: because if tendered but refused, he never could have disproved by evidence the imputations conveyed. It is his misfortune to fight against lurking suspicions, not against evidence; it must be for his advantage that everything that can breathe upon his character may be adduced and explored......... I must now address the House upon the topic of the unexampled severities that have oppressed the culprit of this Bill.............Apprised, in March, 1779, of all the political enormities spread before you in this Bill, the Company thanked him at a General Court for his active and able services. From the period of those thanks, (a year and a half,) I ask why the resentment which is now so inexorable slept?...

"A sentence before he has been heard, in direct breach of those very covenants which the Directors tell him he has violated! A sentence which ends with partialities I challenge any man to vindicate or excuse. One of the Council is only reprimanded, though deep in all the supposed guilt of Sir Thomas Rumbold. Two

others included, but restored in less than a month. Orders have been sent to the East; orders which I call by no other name than subornation of evidence. They bribe the informer by assuring to him a part of any corrupt acquisition to the culprit's fortune, which he can bring forward; and they mark the corruption as believed by themselves, although not proved in form.*

"I will now tell the House why the censure was reserved for 1781. Between March, 1779, and January, 1781, in that critical period, Sir Thomas Rumbold writes to the Company, and enters a firm and able protest against the Mahratta war, the war of the Directors, duped

* Extract from the concluding part of Mr. Hardinge's "Defence:"—"I have now dissected all the corruption of Sir Thomas Rumbold, which the industry and vigilance of those who drew this Bill could insinuate. Not a shilling has been traced into his pocket by the keen eyes of the subordinates, men whose corruption he reformed, whose resentment he provoked. The Zemindars, courted and bribed by the Directors to betray the extortions practised upon them, are unaccountably mute, though he is at a distance from them, no longer in the service, and his character branded by the Inquisition itself thus erected over him. From the total disappointment and failure of these various engines and complicated exertions, I surely may infer more than strict legal innocence."

by the Council of Bombay. He urges unanswerable arguments upon this topic, with ill-timed energy and zeal, a little time before the Philippic of 1781 appeared, a natural consequence of them.........If that is not the key of the Philippic in 1781, I call upon the advocates for the accuser to put any other into my hand. It is agreed that with full notice of all his crimes, those who are now his persecutors, and state those crimes against him with such acrimony, at least approved of his conduct; wrote a series of letters to their delinquent minister; to that minister, whom, if you give them credit for their present account of him, they should not have left at Madras for an hour in his office; in which they expressed no material disapprobation of a single item in his conduct, but spoke of him with regard and confidence. Nor is it less agreed, that after the arrival of this letter, which protested against the Mahratta war, the tables were turned, the accuser of that war became in a moment the culprit of those whom he accused, and was held forth to the public, in a libel circulated by the Directors, before his defence was heard, or any charge put into form, as a peculator, a tyrant, and a coward. The Directors, having published and circulated this anathema,

form a powerful body of prejudice against their victim........

"Effects are cruel and false arguments of guilt in the measures which produced them. But here no injurious consequences have been marked by the accuser, except Hyder's invasion of the Carnatic, the cause of which is at least a political problem admitting of many solutions. I shall have occasion to demonstrate hereafter, that Sir Thomas Rumbold was not the cause of that war, was an enemy to what he believed the cause of it, and pointed that enmity like a man of honour, though it provoked a nest of hornets, who would now sting him to death if they could. The Council of Madras quarrelled with Bengal: which of them was *right?*".......

CHAPTER II.

PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT AGAINST SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD. THE BILL OF PAINS AND PENALTIES.

THE extracts given in the last chapter have indicated the origin of the persecution Sir Thomas Rumbold encountered. Some brief account of the manner in which the proceedings were carried on in the House of Commons is now given from the Parliamentary Register.*

When the "Bill of Pains and Penalties" against Sir Thomas Rumbold was brought into the House of Commons by Mr. Dundas, it was argued by several members of the House that the measures pursued were "cruel and unconstitutional;" that they were "strongly opposed to the tribunal that was to try Sir Thomas Rumbold, the House being the grand jury that had found the Bill, the petty jury that were to try the accused, and, above all, the accusers." And it was asked, "How could an equitable decision be found in such a place?

* Hansard's "Parliamentary Register," vol. xxii., pp. 114–138, 1275, 1332, 1407.

"A tribunal where the judges were not upon oath, it was urged, was unprecedented in every part of this country. The Attorney-General protested against the manner of the proceedings. The Solicitor-General declared the proceedings to be an extraordinary departure from the established laws and constitution."........He argued that, "although the preamble of the Bill only stated there were suspicions against Sir Thomas Rumbold, upon these suspicions that gentleman's whole property was to be locked up;".... that "the clause to compel him to give an account of his property upon oath, on pain of death, was an inquisition of a most tyrannic nature, that would establish a dangerous precedent, and this against a man who, in the present stage of the business, must be presumed innocent;.......that these proceedings, which went to extort proofs from a man against himself, were repugnant to reason, justice, law, equity, and nature."

To these arguments Mr. Fox replied, that "this was an extraordinary case, and would justify a departure from, as it was out of the reach of, any existing law. He" (Mr. Fox) "could not think of sending out to India to discover what specific injuries had been done to individuals

there;.....he feared such a measure would end in the death of such individuals who would dare to give evidence against any of the ruling powers of the country." *

On the 3rd of May, 1782, "Sir Thomas Rumbold urged his claim to be heard by his counsel against the Bill......When he should give in upon oath a statement of his property, the whole of which lay within the dominions of Great Britain," he said, "it would be found it had been greatly exaggerated."

Mr. Fox persisted in assuming that Sir Thomas Rumbold had immense wealth somewhere, which "they" (the House of Commons) "were to prove had been amassed by peculation: this he desired should be forthcoming for the purposes of restitution......He then painted the happy consequences to our future Government in India, from restitution thus made."

Mr. Burke spoke in strong terms to the same effect. "Sir Thomas Rumbold desired the honourable Member to lay his finger upon any part of the Bill that directly charged him with peculation. There was a kind of implied charge of that nature; but there was not a direct one.

* Mr. Fox explained that he alluded to a case that had occurred not long before in Bengal.

Did the Bill state from whom money had been extorted? To whom, then, could it be restored? It had been represented in a former debate that the House was acting as a grand jury finding a Bill: he would then call upon any forty gentlemen in the House to declare, if they had examined even the *ex parte* evidence, on which the Resolutions of the Secret Committee against him were founded: if they had read the Appendices (or evidence) to which these Resolutions referred, and if they could as grand jurors lay their hands upon their hearts, and declare as gentlemen, and as honest men, that the evidence bore out the charges: if they could not answer this question in the affirmative, he did not see how they could vote for the restraining Bill in any stage.......

"Sir Thomas Rumbold desired it might be noted, that he claimed to be heard by his counsel against the Bill." "The Lord Advocate opposed the claim of the honourable Member to be heard in his defence. If he had a right to be heard in the present stage of the proceedings, all the preceding steps had been wrong, and contrary to the precedent in the South Sea case, which had been strictly copied."

"Sir Thomas Rumbold maintained that his

case was by no means parallel to that of the persons there concerned, since in their petition to the House of Lords they acknowledged their guilt; *he, on the contrary, stood on his defence, and maintained his innocence.*"

These debates took place early in the Session of 1782.

After the interval of a twelvemonth, during which much delay and many postponements had been occasioned by the non-attendance of members, witnesses, &c., on the Committee appointed to inquire into the case; the prosecution was opened in February, 1783, and the defence was closed on the last day of May following.

When at the Bar of the House of Commons it was proved what was the amount of the property, from the restitution of which Mr. Fox had anticipated such happy effects to the people of India, and to the English Government, a hue of ridicule seemed to invest the whole affair; but the first impressions had been given, extravagant notions with regard to the wealth of Sir Thomas Rumbold had been set in circulation,—all this had been afloat for many months, and these first impressions have pursued the character of Sir Thomas Rumbold until this time.*

* In a voluminous biography of Lord Cornwallis, published

In the ninth chapter of his fourth volume, Mr. Mill has given a summary account of the proceedings in Parliament, and the manner in which the prosecution was abandoned. The animosity which unfortunately has influenced him throughout, as relates to Sir Thomas Rumbold, has led him to depart here from the usual clearness of his style. The account is at least ambiguous, and tends to give a false impression. As the view set forth by Mr. Mill has been very generally borrowed by succeeding historians, the passage is repeated here, and it will afterwards be shown how the same transactions appear in the Parliamentary Register of the time.

"On the 9th of April, 1782," (Mr. Mill says,) "Mr. Dundas moved, that the Reports which he had presented as chairman of the Secret Committee should be referred to a Committee of the whole House.......Articles of charge against Sir Thomas Rumbold were adopted; and a Bill

within ten years, it is mentioned, among many false statements, as a credible and probable fact, that Hyder Ali was bribed by Sir Thomas Rumbold to delay the invasion of the Carnatic. In the same publication the Secretary, Mr Redhead, is turned into Mr. Whitehill, and represented as becoming Governor of Madras, and is made to terminate his career, as Mr. Paul Benfield, in a garret at Paris. Other writers tell us, not only that Sir Thomas Rumbold bribed Mr. Dundas, but the whole House of Commons.

of pains and penalties for breaches of public trust, and high crimes and misdemeanours, committed by him, was introduced by Mr. Dundas. The Bill was read a first time. Before the second reading, Sir Thomas Rumbold was heard in his defence. The Session drew to a close before a great progress was made. In the beginning of 1783, the state of the ministry was unsettled,—and as if when ministry is unsettled, Parliament were unequal to their functions, the Bill was neglected till the middle of the Session. After the middle of the Session the members soon began to be remiss in their attendance. And on the 19th of December, immediately after Mr. Fox's coalition ministry, a motion was made and carried for adjourning the further consideration of the Bill till the 24th of June next, by which the prosecution was finally dropped. Sir Thomas Rumbold consented to accept impunity without acquittal; his judges refused to proceed in his trial after they had solemnly affirmed the existence of guilt; and a black stain was attached to the character of them both." *

In this sweeping denunciation of both judges and accused, which has passed current with sub-

* For this see Parliamentary History, vol. xxii., p. 1291; also, vol. xxiii., p. 75.

sequent historians, Mr. Mill contradicts the express declarations of the judges to whom he refers, as having "affirmed the existence of guilt." Those judges were extremely cautious in the expressions they allowed themselves to use with regard to a "man untried, and before any evidence had been heard."* When it was represented to Mr. Dundas, that the Second Report was a mere personal charge, he spoke in these terms: —"In their inquisitorial capacity it was not their province to ascertain criminality or inflict censure. . . . . . The whole remained to be proved and established, before it assumed the weight of a criminal charge." And it was said by Mr. Fox, that "it would not be inconsistent for the House to agree to the resolutions against Sir Thomas Rumbold, in their inquisitorial capacity, and afterwards, when he came to throw fresh light on the evidence by his defence, for them, in a judicial capacity, to alter their opinion." It is still more important to notice that in the passage quoted above, Mr. Mill has affirmed that, before the close of the Session of 1782, the Bill was read a second time, Sir Thomas Rumbold having been previously heard in his defence. But the case was not so. The counsel for the prosecution

* Parliamentary History, vol. xxii., p. 1282.

and for the defence were not heard until the Session of 1783, and upon what is called the second reading of the Bill. The defence followed the second reading: and, as it will presently be shown, the proceedings, after the evidence was heard, were immediately arrested. Mr. Mill subjoins, in a note, quotations from the speeches of Mr. Dundas and Mr. Fox, of the 2nd of May, 1783, in which the former complained of the thin attendance of members. "If it was the intention of the House to drop the business, he wished to be made acquainted with that circumstance," &c. "Mr. Fox declared that to drop the Bill would be productive of the most fatal consequences; and therefore he requested gentlemen would, for the credit, honour, and interest of their country, attend to the evidence for and against the Bill. If the Bill should be lost for want of attendance, it would not clear the character of Sir Thomas Rumbold; on the other hand, it would hold out this idea to the people of India, that it was vain for them to expect redress of their grievances in England."

It is quite true that Mr. Fox said, "If the Bill were lost from want of attendance, it would not clear the character of Sir Thomas Rumbold;" and the import of those words was perfectly

just; but their bearing upon the case would have been totally different if, as Mr. Mill's quotation would lead us to suppose, in that stage of the proceedings the Bill had been suddenly and unaccountably dropped; there would then have been ground for much surmise to account for this circumstance. It was on the 2nd of May that these words were spoken, and at that time the evidence against the Bill had scarcely been gone into. On the 30th of May the evidence was closed; the subject which engaged the House on that day was the proofs from whence the money remitted to England by Sir Thomas Rumbold had been drawn. Until that time, although there had been much delay, the zeal of the prosecutors had not relaxed, as Mr. Mill's quotations plainly show. On the 2nd of June the subject was resumed, when a great change is apparent in the tone of every member who spoke.

However there may still have existed political animosity, it may fairly be asserted that of the charge of corruption Sir Thomas Rumbold was absolved in the mind of that portion of the House who had listened to the evidence. Several members spoke of the hardship and cruelty of prolonging the business for another year, and

the absurdity of binding five hundred and fifty-eight men, in case a dissolution should intervene, to decide upon evidence they had not heard. Mr. Fox said, "In his opinion, it was necessary to have the evidence printed, not only for those to read who did not attend, but for those who did attend; for, it being so voluminous, and given at so many different times, many parts of it, he did not doubt, had escaped the memory of the most close attendant to the business; therefore, if there was not time to print and decide upon it this Session, it was good reason for putting it off...... He declared he had never acted upon the subject of the Honourable Baronet's cause as a Minister, nor would he ever attempt it.* The cause was that of all others upon which every sort of influence ought to be avoided, and upon which gentlemen ought to act with the purest freedom and independency,

* In this rather misgiving speech, it is impossible not to remark the inconsistency of the declaration, that "he had never acted in this cause as a Minister," with a private letter given in Mr. Fox's published correspondence, in which he complains of the little parliamentary influence he had been able to exert upon the Bill for securing Sir Thomas Rumbold's property. "We were only," he says, "36 to 33. The Attorney-general and Solicitor-general were both against me; and I had the mortification to depend for support upon the Lord Advocate, Jenkinson, and Mansfield."

taking nothing for their guides but *reason*, *candour*, and *justice*."*

"The Solicitor-general said, he had always considered the proceedings against Sir Thomas Rumbold as illegal; and he was pretty sure he should not have to change his opinion. He was confident that when the day of trial should come, Sir Thomas Rumbold would be honourably acquitted; and therefore he could not, for one, consent that a man, of whose innocence he was thoroughly persuaded, from the defence he had heard, should be any longer kept under the terrors of a restraining Act."

Other members "thought, as the whole of the evidence had been heard, and it was now seen Sir Thomas Rumbold had not been guilty of such enormous crimes but that his visible property would be able to answer, he ought not to be restrained by a Bill of pains and penalties, but only held to bail."

There is one incident in that debate which speaks strongly to the fact, that Sir Thomas Rumbold felt himself reinstated in the opinion of those who had not, for their own purposes, conspired to make him a culprit. He knew that

* This debate extends from page 983 to 988, vol. xxiii. of the Parliamentary History.

when Mr. Burke pursued him so fiercely, it was under a sincere impression that he was guilty of the charges made against him; and to Mr. Burke only he now particularly addresses himself. After describing in general terms the delay of justice to which he had been subjected, and the cruelty of putting the business off for another year, "he very affectingly alluded to the manner in which Mr. Burke had treated him in that House, comparing it with the humanity he had of late so powerfully extended to others, standing as he stood in the light of persons accused only, but not proved criminal." *

And Mr. Burke responded to the appeal.

"He felt extremely for the honourable Baronet, who had shown uncommon fortitude throughout the progress of the business, *and thrown himself as fairly upon the candour of the House as any man could have done.*" If any meaning is to be attached to these words, Mr. Burke, hitherto the most strenuous supporter of the prosecution, if he does not here pronounce his sentence of acquittal, at least admits that his former opinions were much shaken. Sir Thomas Rumbold had not pleaded the difficulties of his position, or any extenuating circumstances; but he absolutely

* Messrs Powell and Bembridge.

denied the whole charge, laid everything open to the inspection of the public, and maintained his innocence. On the following day, the 3rd of June, the excessive bail was taken off, and Mr. Dundas declared in the House Sir Thomas Rumbold was free to leave the kingdom.

The accounts from this time are very slender. It is mentioned that there were two or more adjournments of the subject, before the Bill was finally dropped, on the 19th of December, 1783, by a vote of the House. On each of these occasions, it may be inferred, that there was a full attendance, since subjects of importance engaged the House before, and immediately after, the adjournments.* On one more occasion the circumstances of this affair were alluded to. In the year 1785, a discussion concerning the same part of India took place, when Mr. Burke and Mr. Dundas were present. The latter referred

* Here there seems to be a slight mistake. At the sitting of December 19th, 1783, the change of Ministry was announced. This was the first matter brought before the House. When this was over, and in a very thin House, Mr. Lee, the ex-Attorney-general, moved that "the further consideration of Sir Thomas Rumbold's Bill of Pains and Penalties be deferred to the 24th of June next." This was carried by twenty-seven to eight. The effect of this vote was to drop the Bill, the adjournment being for more than "six months."—Editor.

to Sir Thomas Rumbold on the question, which was connected with his administration. It is recorded that, "on the 28th of February, Mr. Fox brought the subject before the House in a call for papers, supported by a powerful speech. Mr. Dundas replied at great length, and was followed by Sir Thomas Rumbold, formerly President of Madras, who condemned the decision of the Board in brief but energetic terms."

Mr. Burke commented upon the remarkable spectacle before them. "The right honourable gentleman," Mr. Burke said, "whose conduct is now in question, (Mr. Dundas,) formerly stood forth in this House the prosecutor of the worthy Baronet who spoke last. He charged him with several grievous acts of malversation in office; with abuses of a public trust of a great and heinous nature. In less than two years we see the situation of parties reversed, and a singular revolution puts the worthy Baronet in a fair way of returning the prosecution in a recriminatory Bill of Pains and Penalties, grounded on a breach of public trust, relative to the very same part of India. If he should undertake a Bill of that kind, he will find no difficulty in conducting it with a degree of skill and vigour fully equal to all that have been exerted against him."

In this, and in the following paragraphs of this celebrated speech, the object of the speaker is rather to contrast "the difference of deportment between these two gentlemen, under the same unhappy circumstances," than to eulogize Sir Thomas Rumbold, further than by a passing tribute to his abilities; but these observations of Mr. Burke entirely repel the idea which has been inculcated, that the former proceedings in that House against Sir Thomas Rumbold, although abandoned, had left him with a tarnished reputation, since Mr. Burke could not in such a case, even by way of hypothesis, have ventured to place him in the position which Mr. Dundas then held.

But in this speech of Mr. Burke there is also testimony to the fact, that Sir Thomas Rumbold had courted the fullest inquiry then, as on every occasion from first to last. It may be seen by reference to the Parliamentary Debates,* that he did, when the subject of Indian affairs was under discussion, and before any accusations were framed against him, urge a thorough investigation and inquiry, which he wished should date from the year 1772, and embrace, of course, the period of his administration; and that, on this

* Parliamentary History, vol. xxii., p. 122.

last occasion, in 1785, he advocated the production of papers relating to the transactions then under consideration, in which he had been intimately concerned.*

It is not, however, what Mr. Fox may have said, or what Mr. Burke may have said, or a verdict of either House of Parliament, that can prevail in after-times to efface the stain thrown upon the character of Sir Thomas Rumbold, since all this might still be ascribed to party influence, or other causes. There are sufficient instances to show that the question in such cases remains an open one.

It is to the evidence produced at the Bar of the House of Commons that appeal is now made.

In the last debate upon Sir Thomas Rumbold's restraining Bill, the question being whether this Bill, of which the time had expired, should be renewed and prolonged through another Session, or in the event of a dissolution of Parliament, the difficulty was urged of binding an assembly of five hundred men by proceedings to which they had been no party, or to vote upon

* A further extract is given in a Supplementary Note to this volume from the terrible and magnificent speech of Burke, to which reference is made in the text. From this it will be seen how well the argument in the text is sustained by the scope of the speech.

evidence they had not heard. Mr. Burke replied, "That the evidence being on record, any person who read it would be as competent to pronounce judgment upon it as those who heard it."

This evidence is still open to all, and must bring conviction to the mind of any person who will investigate it, that it was neither owing to "the influence of party," nor to "the insufficient attendance of members," nor was it that "Mr. Dundas was bribed," or that any of the different surmises to which the malice of disappointed enemies had recourse was true, but simply because the charges were completely disproved, that the prosecution was abandoned.

If the manner of the Bill being dropped had been unsatisfactory at the time, or, it should rather be said, had the political party who wished to devote him seen a pretext left to enable them to persevere, why was the matter suffered to rest there? Sir Thomas Rumbold continued in Parliament until his death. During that interval the House did not lose sight of Indian affairs, and Mr. Fox's Bill succeeded to that of Mr. Dundas.*

* It appears, in the Journals of the House, that a vote was passed to pay the costs of the Bill. The names of Mr. Dundas, Mr. Dempster, and Mr. Burke are among those on the Committee.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHARGES AGAINST SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD.

The object of this vindication is to make a reply to the historians in general, and to the "Parliamentary Reports of the Committee of Secrecy," from which some of these historians have drawn, and others may in future draw, their information.

It will, however, be well to enumerate the charges that were made in "the Bill of Pains and Penalties," which did not adopt all that are to be found in the "Reports."

The order of the charges is here altered, chiefly in this respect,—that the last urged in the Bill, and replied to in the defence, is here placed at the head of the list. They may be stated as follows:—

1st. The remittances made by Sir Thomas Rumbold to England were considered as proofs of a corrupt acquisition of his fortune.

2nd. Charges were brought against him relative to his supposed influence over his Council, or to the effect that he acted independently of them.

3rd. Charges were founded on the facts, that

the Committee of Circuit was suspended by the Council of Madras, and the Zemindars called to the Presidency to settle their tribute there; and also relating to the treatment of the Vizianagrum family at Madras.

4th. The extension of the lease of the Jaghire lands to the Nabob of Arcot was an article in the Bill.

5th. The suppression of Mr. Sadlier's letter to Sir Thomas Rumbold, accusing the subordinates of corrupt practices, was another count of the indictment.

6th. It was alleged that the Council of Madras treated with Bazalet Jung, for the cession of the Guntoor Circar to the Company, without the consent of the Nizam, and that Sir Thomas Rumbold meant to conceal this affair from the Nizam.

7th. That offence was given to Hyder Ali by the march of the troops over part of his dominions.

8th. It was made a charge against Sir Thomas Rumbold that he solicited, through his ambassador, a remission or abatement of the tribute which the Company had bound themselves to pay for the Northern Circars.

9th. The recal of Mr. Hollond from his embassy was a matter of complaint.

10th. The unprepared state of the Carnatic, at the time when Hyder Ali began the war, was made a charge against Sir Thomas Rumbold.

These may stand as the definite heads of accusation, after stripping away the invective which swells the charges to a great length. There are perpetual insinuations of concealment ascribed to Sir Thomas Rumbold, but they will be found frivolous and self-contradictory; the principal of these will be noticed when treating the cases to which they were applied. The last charge, "The unprepared state of the Carnatic," was abandoned by the Counsel for the Bill; and also a charge of "breach of covenant," for having not declared the property he possessed in Bengal, was withdrawn.

I.—THE CHARGE OF CORRUPTION.

We proceed now to the charge of corruption grounded upon the fact that Sir Thomas Rumbold remitted large sums to England.*

* From the year 1760 until 1772, Sir Thomas Rumbold had large commercial dealings with Bengal.

In the Resolutions laid before the House of Commons, the sum stated to have been remitted is £160,000. Sir Thomas Rumbold declared to the Directors that he had remitted £167,000, of which sum £38,000 was on account of other people. It may be observed, in the Second Report of the Committee of Secrecy, App., No. 66,

Although there was not one direct charge on that score, a suspicion of corrupt motives was attached to every act of his administration. It is proposed to refute this general suspicion, first, by a statement of the proofs adduced at the bar of the House of Commons, to the effect that at the time Sir Thomas Rumbold left England he was possessed of property in Bengal to a larger amount than the sums he remitted during the time he was Governor of Madras, and that these sums were actually drawn from Bengal; and, secondly, by showing that the measures to which a suspicion of corrupt influence was particularly attached, were in themselves equitable; that they were demanded by the circumstances of the case; and, moreover, that they were followed by beneficial results to the Company and to the country.

The early remittances,* upon which much

also Evidences, p. 170, that the accounts show four sums, specified as sent from other persons, which, when Sir Hector Munro's portion is added, amount to £35,000.

* Of these early remittances, £10,572 (so paid in England) belonged to Sir Hector Munro.—Evidences, p. 529. In the Report of the Committee, and in the Bill, this sum is stated as proved to have been £466.—Supplemental App., Second Report, No. 2.

stress was laid, were in specie, and sent by ships of the Company. It was of these only that the Directors had cognizance; the remaining sums were sent by bills, and were declared to them by Sir Thomas Rumbold himself. Immediately on his return, in 1781, when he found the money he had remitted was made a ground of suspicion against him, he hastened to deliver to the Court of Directors, and to the Committee, a duplicate account, which had been left in England, and which showed him to have been possessed of this property in Bengal, in the securities of the Company, and that it was bearing interest at the time of his departure to assume the government of Madras.*

The papers, also, which he delivered to the Committee, showed that his desire having been to remit this money to England, an engagement had been concluded before his arrival in India, which obliged him to send, by way of China, a large sum before a specified time, or a considerable forfeiture of per-centage would have been incurred.

It is impossible not to remark how surely it would have been in the power of the Directors, when thus challenged by Sir Thomas Rumbold,

* Second Report, Committee of Secrecy, No. 66.

before he was accused in form, had truth been their object, to have verified, or disproved, this statement; it would appear, however, that they did admit the facts, since they grounded upon them the charge of a breach of the covenant which required the servants of the Company to declare, upon their arrival in India, to the Board, "any stock-in-trade, or loans, in which they might be concerned with the country powers."

Sir Thomas Rumbold had not any property which could accord with that description; but the terms of the covenant were altered in passing through the Committee, with a view to criminate him. A comparison with the original covenant shows clearly the difference between the real obligation and the view of it held out to the public in the Report of the Committee, where the limitation of the kind of loans he was bound to declare is omitted.*

It was also an averment in the Bill, "that the failure of Sir Thomas Rumbold to declare the debts that were owing to him was aggravated by the circumstance that no penalty was attached to the covenant;" whereas it was, in fact, guarded by a penalty of £50,000.†

* Second Report, Committee of Secrecy, p. 232.

† Mr. Hardinge's Defence of Sir Thomas Rumbold, p. 21.

This charge of breach of covenant is not rebutted in the evidence for the defence, since it was among many articles of the Bill which it was found necessary for the prosecution to abandon; but it remains in the Parliamentary Report of the Committee, and is accordingly brought prominently forward in Mr. Mill's History.

Another charge was made in the Report. The remittances, it was alleged, were effected secretly; "for they were not inserted in the boatswain's books." This was also an abandoned article, no evidence being attempted to prove that articles of private remittance were inserted in the boatswain's books, though this was boldly asserted in the Report. It may be remarked, that where the examination of the Captain of the ship is given in the Report, the only material part of his evidence *not cited there, but which is to be found in the Appendix*, was, that "such omissions were so very frequent, that he did not even inquire why this was not entered."* And, further, that "those entries were the business of the officer in command at the time, and the person to whom the property belonged could not know anything about it. If no

* Second Report, App., No. 63.

entry were made, the Captain had the whole profit of the freight. *In public cases* the obligation of entry was enforced." *

If we turn to the Minutes of Evidence, pages 518–532, it will be seen that there was this corroborative testimony in favour of Sir Thomas Rumbold:—the existence of the property in Bengal was known to his agents in England; and also, previously to his departure, he had instructed his agent in Bengal to collect his property in that province, and remit it to him at Madras. The reason that this property had remained in Bengal was also explained by this circumstance, that the channel for remittance by Company's cash had been closed, and the agents had been enjoined to employ no other mode. But the absolute proofs rest upon the bankers' accounts of the sums remitted by them to Madras, or direct to England; and also upon the *agreement* of the statement given by Sir Thomas Rumbold of the whole amount of his property, *at that hour*, (including pictures, plate, and every article of value, in any part of the world,) with what it was proved to have been, by his agents, in the years 1773 and 1777, upon his last departure from England.

* See Evidences, p. 529.

This statement Sir Thomas Rumbold had been required to give upon oath; and if he should be found in error £500, he was perjured, and his whole property confiscated at the mercy of an informer, or, it was said in the House, "on pain of death."

The proofs were in order as follows:—*

"The counsel for Sir Thomas Rumbold stated, that they should next proceed to the allegations of the Bill with respect to the remittances made by Sir Thomas Rumbold to England; and that they should on his part admit that, during the time of his being last in India, he had remitted, on his own account, the sum of £130,000; but that, in fact, he had more property than to that amount before he went out."...........

"The Counsel then proposed to call the clerk, &c., who had the management of Sir Thomas Rumbold's accounts from the year 1769. This was objected to by the Counsel for the Bill, and then all the Counsel were directed to withdraw, and they were again called in, and the Counsel for Sir Thomas Rumbold directed to proceed."

After the evidence had been given by the agents in Bengal, and in England, of the amount of property since the year 1769 to that hour,

* Evidences, p. 513.

"the Counsel stated they would show what had been remitted on Sir Thomas Rumbold's account from Bengal in the years 1778, 1779, and 1780." These several accounts current being brought up and verified as the handwriting of the agent in Bengal, were read. (See Evidences, pp. 518–532.) The Public Treasurer of Madras was then called to reckon these accounts, and turn them into English money. It will be found that these several sums, with the addition of two bills, amounting together to £15,570, proved to have been paid, one in Bengal, and remitted to Madras; the other, which had borne interest since the year 1769, sent direct from Bengal to England; make up (exclusively of the share belonging to Sir Hector Munro, and the sums specified as sent for other people) £98,133.

It was admitted that £49,000 had been paid to the Governor for salary, commission, &c., and also that he had received £2,283 for the use of his town and country house, and for plate, and that his carriages and wines had been sent to him from England.

Mr. Mill has made some observations upon the money that had remained in Bengal, as stated in the Appendix to the Second Report of the Commission of Secrecy, (No. 66,) which he

describes as very near the amount afterwards proved at the Bar of the House of Commons.*

Professor Wilson has here inserted a note, in which he declares "these particulars to be loosely and inaccurately stated," and has made a calculation of his own of these accounts, in the place of that declared at the Bar of the House of Commons, and turned into English money before vigilant lookers on. In this calculation Professor Wilson has made a mistake, but his remarks are useful, as they serve to bring this portion of the defence into a small compass. He admits it to be "proved that Sir Thomas Rumbold had property in Bengal, in the beginning of the year 1773, to the amount of £121,000." He admits it to be proved that no addition to his property in England, between that time and 1779, had been made. But he questions the inference that no remittances could have been effected. Professor Wilson throws a doubt upon the assumption that this property to the same amount still existed in Bengal, because, he says, "in 1773 it had been delivered over to other agents, and because it may be observed, that Sir Thomas

* It may be observed, the interest of these different sums varied from five to six and eight per cent., and was never higher than ten.

Rumbold's account current with his banker, dated March, 1778, opens with but a small sum, which added to moneys paid on account of sums lent, amounts to something more than £40,000. It is also in evidence that he received £49,000 salary. There remains a considerable sum to be accounted for, to explain the large amount of his remittances to England."

What this amount was proved to be, and what sum the Bill, in consequence, required Sir Thomas Rumbold to justify, Professor Wilson does not seem to have informed himself; but in his calculation he has overlooked one article, which shows an earlier date than he has assigned, and proves also that it belongs *not to the opening, but the continuation, of an account*. This article is the agent's commission upon sums remitted from Bengal to Madras, dated from November, 1777, which shows an amount of £48,000. This article proves also that there were bonds still bearing interest, and of which the interest only had then passed into the agent's hands.

That this account was fragmentary was explained by the circumstance that the ship (the "General Barker") in which Sir Thomas Rumbold returned, was wrecked upon the coast, and many of his books and papers were lost. Happily some accounts were saved, and these did enable the Counsel to

justify with accuracy the sums remitted. Professor Wilson's doubts are unsupported. Against Sir Thomas Rumbold's statements not a tittle of evidence can be brought; while they are abundantly corroborated by all the evidence of which the case admitted.

The foregoing statements have been made as briefly as possible. It remains to show, under the charge of corruption, that Sir Thomas Rumbold's administration of the public funds can be vindicated by proofs which place it beyond the reach of all suspicion.

An increase of revenue was paid into the treasury from the Northern Circars, during Sir Thomas Rumbold's government, of £228,900;* and an average increase of £111,500 for each year, for lands rented by the Nabob of Arcot. Also, accounts were produced at the Bar of the House by the Public Treasurer, showing the amount in the treasury, at different epochs, at Madras and at the subordinate stations, and the expenditure respectively, before and after the military expeditions set on foot.

It was soon after the siege of Pondicherry that Sir Eyre Coote arrived at Madras, and took his seat at the Board for some months before he

* Evidences, p. 245. *Ibid.*, p. 329.

proceeded to Calcutta. The President profited by this occasion to request his particular attention to the state of the treasury, and the extreme difficulties with which they had to contend, in obtaining supplies from the Nabob of Arcot and the Rajah of Tanjore; and he strongly urged, at that early period, the adoption of the plan which was afterwards carried out by Lord Macartney, that the Nabob should assign some portion of the revenues of the Carnatic towards the support of the military force, which he, the President, declared to be on a larger scale than the resources of the presidency could maintain, "in order that Sir Eyre Coote might, when he should take his place at the Council General of Bengal, make such representations as should obtain the support and assistance of that Board, in the measures necessary to be adopted for the preservation of the Carnatic." Letters to this effect were also addressed to the Governor-General and to the Directors. Some extracts of these are given, and also of Sir Eyre Coote's letters and minutes at the end of the volume. In consequence of Sir Eyre Coote's representations at Bengal, the Governor-General and Council granted to Madras a supply of fifteen lacs of rupees, of which ten were sent, and five

promised, but subsequently withheld. On this occasion of granting the supply the Governor-General had required of the Presidency a strict account of their past receipts and disbursements, and their liabilities for the ensuing year. This requirement had been as strictly complied with, and also the claims they would have to meet were stated, among which, it may be observed, mention is made of the tribute due to the Nizam of the Deccan for the Northern Circars, which had fallen into arrears before Sir Thomas Rumbold took charge of the Presidency.*

2.—INFLUENCE OVER THE BOARD.

The unanimity of the Board in passing those measures which the Directors sought to represent as corruptly obtained by the President, threw some difficulty in the way of Sir Thomas Rumbold's accusers. This it appears they obviated by putting forth a false and groundless accusation, which was imposed upon the Committee, who were ignorant of the rules of the Company's service. The slightest observation is sufficient to refute this accusation.

It is borrowed by Mr. Mill, and introduces the subject of the dealings with the Zemindars.

* [Evidences, pp. 208, (No. 164,) 370, (No. 420,) 371, 415, (No. 404,) 418, (No. 405,) 419, (No. 406,) 464, (No. 446.)—Ed.] See also Appendix B, at the end of the Volume.

"In every case the Governor alone negociated with the Zemindars, and regulated their payments; in no case did he lay the grounds of his treaty before the Council; in every case the Council without inquiry acquiesced in his decrees."

On this charge very full testimony was given, by four persons high in the service of the Company, at Madras and Bengal, to the fact, that "all business with the country powers, was in the first instance done by the Governor. It was with him alone that they had personal communication. He reported to the Board the progress of the treaty, or matter of business under consideration, giving such explanation as the Board might think proper to call for."* But, if we open the Appendices to the Reports, it will plainly appear that "the Governor," here spoken of, did not adhere to this regulation of the service, but acted in most cases in conjunction with the Board; and in the case of the Zemindars, upon which Mr. Mill immediately dwells, he himself quotes the words of "the President," addressed to the Rajah, where he speaks of "the instances of the Board repeatedly made, conjunctively, as well as separately." And further,

* See Evidences, pp. 237, 295, 296.

when the reconciliation between the Rajahs had taken place, the President referred them, on the question of an increase of tribute, to the Board independently, declaring himself not wholly satisfied with the terms he had been able to obtain.*

* Second Report, Appendix, No. 51, p. 385.

CHAPTER IV.

THE THIRD CHARGE: RELATING TO THE SUSPENSION OF THE COMMITTEE OF CIRCUIT, THE SUMMONING OF THE ZEMINDARS TO MADRAS, AND, IN PARTICULAR, THE TREATMENT OF THE VIZIANAGRUM FAMILY.

Still further to refute the suspicions of corrupt motives, thrown upon the conduct of Sir Thomas Rumbold, it shall now be shown that the measures to which those suspicions were attached were equitable, and beneficial in their results. Of these, the chief, and those chiefly in question, were the suspension of the Committee of Circuit, and calling the Zemindars to the presidency, to treat with them there.

This subject, which is classed under Charge No. 3, comprises the treatment of the Vizianagrum family, and also necessarily the suspicion that it was sought to cast upon Sir Thomas Rumbold, of being concerned in the intrigues of his Secretary, Mr. Redhead.

The measure now in question was successful in conciliating the Zemindars, who were combining to resist the Committee of Circuit, to an innova-

* Evidences, p. 318.

tion that alarmed and was altogether obnoxious to them; their allegiance was secured during the very critical period that followed, and where the revenue had totally failed from the Northern Circars, it was obtained, and was found a fruitful resource, during the war.

When Sir Thomas Rumbold arrived at Madras, he was met by accounts of the distressed condition of the Zemindaries. He then asked for three weeks in which to possess himself of the subject. On the 24th of March, when he declared his views to the Council, the situation in general of the Northern Circars was this:—Abuses had been committed by the Chief and Council of the subordinate governments; a total failure of revenue had been incurred; the Zemindars were embarrassed with debts, and almost insolvent; they had many dissensions among themselves; they were become jealous of the Government, and the innovation of the Committee of Circuit had inflamed that jealousy to a state bordering upon disaffection.*

The President reasoned thus:—"Were the subordinates, or the Council of Madras, fitte¬, at

* The Zemindars of Masulipatam alone owed upwaros of £438,000, including debts to their bankers, for which they paid interest of two and a half per cent. a month.

this period of distress and approaching war, to make the new arrangement of tribute? What pledge have we that the subordinates, who have given birth to these difficulties, will extricate the Company from them? We must guard against these enormous balances; but first let us ascertain them. Let us hear the Zemindar, and redress the injuries he has received. The plan we adopt will give them confidence to appeal, in case of grievances and oppression, to the tribunal the most adequate to redress them."

The attendance of the Zemindars at Madras, in some respects ineligible in itself, was the necessary part of a system; but it also turned out in the event of peculiar advantage. Their inevitable stay at Madras, until after the fall of Pondicherry, made them hostages for the allegiance of their own Governments; and they not only continued in peace, but were found a liberal resource of military supply, of active service, and revenue.*

* In the few observations Professor Wilson has made upon the Minutes of the Evidence, he makes this mention of the circumstances attending the reconciliation of the two Northern Zemindars:—"As Vizieram was childless, his adoption of his nephew was in strict conformity to the Hindu law; the Council of Madras could not choose but concur in it.

"That the reconciliation of the brothers, however enforced, was

The distances from which the Zemindars came are unfairly stated in the "Report." Gangam and Vizagapatam alone are mentioned. From the former, the poorest and the most remote of the Zemindars, none were required to attend; from Vizagapatam, five hundred miles distant, Vizieram Raz only came, and with his free assent. The average distance was three hundred miles.

At the time of these transactions, Vizieram

permanent and productive of good effects, was satisfactorily shown by the results. It was effected in July, 1778. The Chief of Vizagapatam, Mr. Casamajor, from June, 1780, to March, 1782, deposes that during that period, the brothers lived in harmony, Sitteram being Duan; that the revenues were improved and regularly paid; and that they could not have been received at all, if the brothers had been at variance. Whatever, therefore, the inducements may have been," (Professor Wilson adds,) "this transaction did not deserve the censure which has been cast upon it."

It is further in evidence, that at a meeting of the Board, September, 1781, (Lord Macartney, President,) it was determined, that no change should be made in that Circar, and that perfect harmony subsisted between the Rajahs. Letters to Lord Macartney are given from the Chief and Council wherein it is mentioned, that all endeavours to obtain loans from the bankers or individuals had failed, and their only dependence was the ample supplies they were enabled to send from the Vizianagrum family.—Minutes of Evidence, pp. 291, 275.

Raz had not very long been of age. He was indolent and easily governed. By intrigues in the family he had become Rajah of this powerful district, in prejudice to Sitteram, his *eldest* brother by some years, (contrary to what has been asserted,) who resisted for a time, but submitted upon terms. A solemn agreement was made that Sitteram should be the Duan, or first minister of his brother, while to Vizieram should be reserved the name and parade of the superior.

For sixteen years Sitteram had acted as the faithful steward of his brother. Shortly before the period of which we have now to speak, a competitor, originally in the confidence of both brothers, had usurped the office, and succeeded in poisoning the mind of the weak younger brother against him, though never, it appears, destroying the mutual affection that had subsisted between them. The consequences of their dissensions had called the troops of the Company into the field, and occasioned a total stoppage of the revenue. The means adopted by the President, when all persuasion had failed, to reconcile Vizieram to his brother, were very simple. He found that the favoured Duan (or Steward) had been a defaulter to his master and

the Company to the amount of £94,000.* In a meeting of the Board, the President proposed that he should be sent to Vizagapatam, to bring his accounts for inspection at Madras. When the influence of this man was removed, the reconciliation of the brothers quickly followed. They had engaged for his debt to the Company, but did not receive from him a rupee. Insolvency and flight terminated his career.†

* Evidences, pp. 56–60.

† This is the story, stated as briefly as possible, which Mr. Mill has recorded for all posterity, quoting the words of the Directors, that "their surprise and concern were great at the unwarrantable manner in which the Presidency appointed the intriguing and ambitious Sitteram Duan of the Circar, and thus put him in possession of the revenues of his elder brother," &c; and, further, that "it was selected as one of the Resolutions moved in the House of Commons by Mr. Dundas, on the 25th of April, 1782, where it was declared, 'That the Governor did, by menaces and harsh treatment, compel the Rajah Vizieram to employ Sitteram Raz as the manager of the Zemindary, in the room of a man of probity and good character; and that the gross ill-treatment he received at the Presidency was humiliating, unjust, and cruel, and highly derogatory to the interests of the East India Company, and to the honour of the British nation."—Mill's History, chap. iv., p. 104.

The words of Vizieram Raz, before the Board of Madras, when he was resisting the endeavours of the President that he should be reconciled to his brother, are repeated in the Report of the Com-

mittee of Secrecy, and cited by Mr. Mill and other historians; but no notice has been taken of the remonstrance of the elder brother.

"Sitteram Raz requested to be allowed to represent some circumstances relative to his own situation, and proceeded as follows:—

"For a considerable length of time I transacted entirely the affairs of my brother's Government; and so much were we at that time upon a footing of equality and brotherly affection, that it was never a question with me whether I acted upon his account or my own. I took all the care I could in the management of his country, and contributed to his welfare and happiness to the best of my ability. I desire to be informed in what light I was to be considered, whether as the brother or servant of the Rajah.

"President.—The Board look upon you as his brother acting under him.

"Sitteram Raz.—I desire that the same question may be put to my brother.

"Vizieram Raz.—It is true he is my brother; but he only held the management of my affairs during my pleasure.

"Question from the Board.—Has Sitteram Raz ever done anything injurious or offensive to you?

"Vizieram Raz.—He has taken away the Braminies maniams.

"Sitteram.—If I have taken away the maniams, who has enjoyed the benefit arising from them?

"Vizieram Raz.—They were received into my treasury.

"Sitteram Raz.—I am sensible that Jaggernaut Raz has contrived and worked up many falsehoods to set me at variance with my brother; but I desire only that Vizieram Raz may declare what I have ever done to injure him." Addressing his brother: —"Your annual revenues, at the time I took the management of them, amounted to about seven lacs of rupees; and when I gave up the management, I left you possessed of a revenue amounting to

upwards of twenty-two lacs. It generally happens that persons acting in so high a trust, receive some benefit to themselves; but I never received any such advantage.

"Vizieram Raz made no reply."

PRESIDENT'S MINUTE, AUGUST 18TH, 1778.

"I am happy to acquaint the Board that a reconciliation has taken place between the two northern Rajahs, which I believe to be sincere.......If I wanted any circumstance to confirm me in the opinion I had formed of the necessity of sending Jaggernaut Raz to Vizagapatam,......the last letters received from that factory will sufficiently evince the propriety of the measure."—Evidences, pp. 56–60.

This account is taken from the case for the prosecution.

CHAPTER V.

SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD'S RELATIONS WITH MR. REDHEAD.

THE matters explained in the last chapter, which ended happily for the brothers, and favourably for the interests of the Company, were attended by an unfortunate circumstance, of which the Directors afterwards availed themselves, when desirous to wreak their anger upon Sir Thomas Rumbold. "We are in possession of one fact," they say, "which, as far as it extends, seems to convey an idea that the Zemindars were abused, and their money misapplied at the presidency."

The fact referred to was, that Sir Thomas Rumbold had an intriguing Secretary. That corruption extensively prevailed in India was well known to the Directors; but it served their purpose in the present instance to infer the corruption of the master from that of the servant. An examination into the imputations which have been raised against Sir Thomas Rumbold, because of his official connexion with Mr. Redhead, follows naturally upon the refu-

tation of the third charge, and will prepare the way for dealing with the fourth.

The intrigues of Mr. Redhead were not completed, but the intention was sufficiently clear. He had been for a short time the private Secretary of Sir Thomas Rumbold, but was retained in that employment but a few months after he arrived at Madras. The death of Mr. Redhead took place shortly afterwards. A paper was found among his effects to this purport, that the Rajah (or Zemindar) Sitteram Raz promised to pay Mr. Redhead a considerable sum, on condition of his assistance in obtaining several points, of which five were specified:—"1. The appointment of Sitteram Raz to be in effect the Company's Duan, but the nominal one of his brother Vizieram. 2. The reconciliation of the two brothers, Vizieram and Sitteram. 3. The confirmation of the son of Sitteram as the adopted Rajah by a grant from the Board. 4. The annexation of Ancapilly and Sitteram (two Zemindaries) to Vizianagrum. 5. The restitution of the fort at Vizianagrum to Vizieram Raz, who had been dispossessed of it by the former Government."

This paper was described as a translation of an original in the Gentoo language. The paper

was unattested, and not signed by Mr. Redhead. It might have been only offered by Sitteram and not accepted; but the executors of Mr. Redhead deemed it sufficiently valid for them to make application for the payment. The claim was denied. A suit was then instituted in the Mayor's court at Madras, and a decision given in favour of the executors, but under circumstances which led to an appeal to the President and Council, who reversed the decision.

Of the five points specified, the merits of the first have been discussed; the two following were involved in that. As to the fourth—the annexation of the lands *—the fact is, that Vizieram had a mortgage upon them. It was a debt of justice to him to pay the mortgage debt, or give him the real pledge. The lease was only to him, and his passion for the land relieved the Company from his demand as mortgage, and gave to them an increase of revenue. It was, in fact, a losing bargain to Vizieram, except that he obtained the use of the land in perpetuity.

Of the fifth point,—the restitution of the fort,—it was at a later period, and when harmony

* Evidences, p. 280.

had been restored between the brothers, that Vizieram Raz, as it is expressed in the "Report of the Committee of Secrecy," "was got into good humour to petition for his fort." The justice and policy of granting this petition are discussed in Sir Thomas Rumbold's Answer to the Committee and Directors, in the Appendix to this volume.

The coincidence of these points with the determinations of the Council might have warranted suspicion, had the measures been new, or unjust, or only brought forward through the corrupt agreement; but Sitteram Raz was found at Madras, negotiating with the Board, when Sir Thomas Rumbold arrived there; and three of the points were recorded by them as approved, and desirable to be obtained.*

The Committee of Secrecy had something further to add on this case, which was adopted by the Bill, and is repeated by Mr. Mill:†—

"Your Committee find that the Chief and Council of Vizagapatam represented, that the practice had always been to receive reports of

* Second Report, p. 277.

† Sitteram Raz's Account Current with the Company. Appendix, Second Report, No. 54; and President's Report to the Board, No. 34.

the character and ability of those who proposed for leases from them; and that they had been much mortified in being overlooked in this instance;"............and also that, "on the 10th of April, about a month after Sir Thomas Rumbold's arrival, the gentlemen of Vizagapatam acquainted the Presidency that they had undeniable proof that a large sum, in money and grain, had been sent to Sitteram Raz at Madras. ....They represented the tenants as cruelly oppressed to make up this sum; and stated the reason of their making this representation to be, that some of his arrears might be secured for the Company."

In the first "representation" cited, the Secret Committee have furnished the solution of the hostility Sir Thomas Rumbold met in his reform of this old "practice." The second representation was shown to rest on no proof whatever. Of the land in question Sitteram had been in possession only two months; the proportions of specie and grain were not specified; Madras was the market for grain from the Northern Circars, and March the time for remitting it. It must have been dispatched, if at all, before Sir Thomas Rumbold's arrival; but, upon receiving this communication, he, by the desire of the Board, made

application to Sitteram Raz, who denied the allegations, but promised to provide immediately for his instalment; and this promise, made on the 24th of April, was fulfilled on the 1st of May ensuing.*

This circumstance must have been overlooked by "the Committee of Secrecy;" they would not otherwise have been led to affirm, that "*the same kind of promise was accepted by the President in July, which had been made, but not observed, in April preceding.*"

This second promise was observed as punctually as the first; and, before the end of October following, the Rajah had paid what was due to the Company.

There was, moreover, found in the will of Mr. Redhead an assertion that he had received from the Nabob of Arcot a promise of a lac of rupees.† No written order from the Nabob to that effect appeared, and it was not stated that any such existed; neither was any date assigned to the promise, or any condition named.

* Appendix, Second Report, No. 54, Sitteram Raz, Account Current with the Company; and President's Report to the Board, No. 34. See also Evidences, p. 270.

† The executors were Mr. Petrie, an old servant of the East India Company, and Mr. Alexander Brodie, then at Madras. He was the father of the late Duchess of Gordon.

This verbal bargain was made to apply to the lease of the Jaghire, which, according to the date of that lease, was granted unanimously by the Council to the Nabob above a month after Mr. Redhead had been finally discarded, and had quitted the employment of Sir Thomas Rumbold.

Although the executors did not consider the money to be due, since, by memoranda in the handwriting of Mr. Redhead, they were acquainted with the conditions annexed to the promise, and knew that they had not been fulfilled; yet, as a matter of form, advised by their lawyer, one of the executors, Mr. Brodie, stated the claim made in the will to the Nabob of Arcot. He owned the promise, but added, "It was on a condition unperformed."

In three long examinations, evidence was given to the effect of what has been last stated; and, also, that Mr. Redhead had been recommended to Sir Thomas Rumbold by General Joseph Smith, to whom he had acted as Persian translator; that he had since been in the service of the Nabob of Arcot; that he had quitted him to proceed to England, in order to further some of the Nabob's projects with regard to Tanjore; that he returned to India in the ship with Sir Thomas Rumbold and the witness, Mr. Petrie;

that it was apparent to the latter, and confessed then to him by Mr. Redhead, as well as admitted in Mr. Redhead's subsequent correspondence, that "he had not Sir Thomas Rumbold's confidence;" and that this "breach" terminated in his being finally discarded from his office, early in August following.*

Before this evidence had been heard, the Counsel for the Bill had disowned the inferred suspicion, by declaring, before the House, that no imputation of complicity with the Secretary could be cast upon Sir Thomas Rumbold. This is noticed by Mr. Hardinge in "The Defence."

More than once Mr. Hardinge had insinuated that, "without prejudice to their zeal as advocates, they had sometimes deserted their prompter." On this occasion, Mr. Hardinge cited the words of Mr. Cowper: "One of the Counsel, with a manly concession, much to his honour, has told us that Mr. Redhead's guilt was not Sir Thomas Rumbold's guilt; and that no evidence had connected them. He, too, was the Counsel

* Private letters now existing in the possession of Sir Thomas Rumbold's family, written by him on his first landing at Madras, explain the cause of this displeasure; and mention that Mr. Redhead was only retained nominally in his employment, and on his urging that it would be detrimental to him to be discharged abruptly.

who closed the evidence, and who told us that it was his peculiar province to mark which of the charges were proved, and in what manner, and to what extent they were sustained." *

Mr. Cowper's precise words before the House, as recorded in his speech, were addressed to Sir Thomas Rumbold as follows:—"The honourable Baronet will understand me as not saying that Mr. Redhead's guilt is his guilt, or that Mr. Redhead's guilt is brought home to him; but if it appeared upon the records of the Court that he was his Secretary, it behoved him, to extinguish every spark of suspicion that might fall upon himself, to disclose this to the East India Company; but, till this inquiry took place, no notice whatever was taken by Sir Thomas Rumbold of his reversal of the judgment of the Court."

It was established, however, by evidence, that the Company's knowledge of this transaction was, in the first place, derived from the communication of it to them by the President, sent in the usual course of the service; and that the proceedings of the "Appellant Jurisdiction" at Madras had been transmitted in the first ship that sailed for England.

* Judge Hardinge's Defence, p. 14.

The witness who gave this testimony was asked by a member of the House, "Where is the record of it?"

His answer was: "In the India House."* Thus the last shadow of suspicion against Sir Thomas in respect of Mr. Redhead is dissipated.

* Minutes of Evidence, p. 518.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EXTENDED LEASE OF THE JAGHIRE LANDS.

By the extension to the Nabob of Arcot of the lease of the Jaghire lands from one year to three, the advantages obtained were, that the arrears of rent, amounting to £90,000, which would probably have been lost to the Company if the lands had been taken out of the Nabob's hands, were insisted upon, and actually paid into the treasury. Also that new and very advantageous conditions were imposed.

The Nabob agreed to repair the tanks and water-courses, which had fallen into decay, and were greatly injured by late floods, so that now there were serious apprehensions of famine. These expensive works the state of the Madras treasury did not permit to be undertaken. Very particular stipulations were made in favour of the weavers, who principally dwelt there; they were to be exempt from taxes, with other immunities. Any native, being oppressed, had liberty of appeal to the President and Council of Madras, who reserved to themselves the power

of displacing the Nabob's agents. The rent was to be paid monthly; and, on failure of one month, the Board would be at liberty to resume the Jaghire, and to let it to whom they pleased.

The strict observance of these conditions was secured by the last article of the lease, which provided that the Council should, at any time, send one or more of the Company's servants to survey the lands, and to see that all the conditions were strictly complied with.

Hitherto there had been no regular covenants between the Nabob and the Company for lands leased to him, but simply agreements by letter. Lord Pigot had attempted a similar proceeding to that now adopted, but was opposed by his Council, who prevailed against him. The Nabob had been willing to continue the lease upon the old terms; but, a delay having occurred in the usual application, the President and Council took advantage of it to ascertain more precisely what value might be set upon the lands, and to impose new conditions. At these the Nabob revolted, especially at the reparation of the tanks, the expense of which, he said, could not be repaid to him under five years.

The Council refused to lease for five years,

as the Nabob desired; but they consented to an extension of the lease from one to three years.* After demurring nearly three months, during which three letters were written to ask his decision, his desire to possess the land prevailed, and the Nabob accepted the conditions.

In arraigning Sir Thomas Rumbold for this lease, the Directors endeavoured to represent that his fault was aggravated by their having declared the intention of taking the lands into their own hands. Although the policy of letting them to the Nabob at all had been a question much agitated, and different opinions had been expressed, the Directors, while willing to admit that more might be obtained from the land if farmed by the Company, had relinquished that contingent benefit, assigning expressly as their reason, that they were apprehensive "such a measure would alienate the Nabob;" and also that it could not be carried into effect "until a plan should be settled for taking them into their own hands." No plan of this kind had been formed; and, at this time, very especial injunctions had been given to the Council of Madras to conciliate the Nabob on account of the displeasure recently occasioned to him by

* Evidences, pp. 314, 322, 323.

the affair of Tanjore.* The Directors had written to this effect: "As we wish by every possible means to conciliate the mind of the Nabob, our friend and ally, apparently disturbed by the late transactions, we have herewith enclosed a letter to his Highness; † and we strictly enjoin upon our President and Council to exert their utmost endeavours to conciliate the affections of his Highness and family; and to be particularly careful on no account or pretence to infringe any of his rights, privileges, or immunities. . . . We rely with the utmost confidence on your affording him every assistance in your power towards obviating any difficulties, or removing any embarrassments, in which his affairs may unhappily have been involved." ‡

These injunctions would have been entirely disregarded had this time been chosen to dispossess the Nabob of the land; but the best comment upon the affair is, that the Directors confirmed, and afterwards renewed, the lease, having profited by the terms, which the exten-

* Evidences, pp. 307, 308.

† Ibid., p. 311.

‡ The Counsel for Sir Thomas Rumbold desired to produce the letter from the Directors to the Nabob. This was objected to by the Counsel for the Bill.

sion of the lease could alone have obtained for them.*

In the account of this transaction in the Report of the Committee of Secrecy, the arrears of payment due from the Nabob are inserted immediately after the statement of the lease granted to him by the Council of Madras, although it was known to the framers of the Reports that all arrears, with the current rent for all lands leased to him, had been obtained.†

But, further than this, they produce a long extract from a Minute formerly given, in order "to show" (they say) "that a difference had

* Evidences, p. 309.

† Throughout the statement made of this transaction in the Report of the Committee, the usual dishonestv prevails. The rent the Nabob engaged to pay is there rated at 324,000 pagodas; but this was exclusive of Poonamalee, which formed part of the Jaghire lands, and, with this addition, the rent paid amounted to 364,000 pagodas.

But, further, there were other offers to rent the land. One of these only proposed for the whole, and at a higher rent than was offered by the Nabob. The Board, on giving consideration to this offer, found that no security was given but the previous mortgage of the lands in question, and that the repairs were to fall upon the Company.

In the Report of the Committee the difference of the rent offered is set forth, but the essential circumstances that attended it are suppressed.

taken place in the sentiments of the President on this later occasion." * Here they have merely left out the word "not," so as to change the whole meaning of the sentence. They make the President say, "The Nabob has attended to the repair of the tanks." If we turn to the Appendix, it will be seen his words were, "The Nabob has *not* attended to the repair of the tanks." †

* Second Report, Appendix, No. 148. † Ibid., No. 153.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FOURTH CHARGE. SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD'S RELATIONS WITH MR. SADLIER.

At the period of which we have to speak, Mr. Sadlier was at Madras under rather humiliating disabilities, having been partially restored by the influence of Lord Pigot, after a suspension from the Company's service, for his conduct in a distant settlement. It was a special object in Sir Thomas Rumbold's instructions to restore the harmony that had been so seriously interrupted. This object he considered would be promoted by employing the talents and activity of Mr. Sadlier as chief of Masulipatam, the situation being temporarily vacant, rather than at Madras; while, at the same time, he might be a useful instrument of his policy, in the check which he aimed at the subordinate intrigues. Mr. Sadlier was all gratitude for "this protection of him from the grossest calumny," and he sent much useful information concerning the Zemindars of

the district; but he gave the President also very prudential advice, in order to deter him from his object. "Leave the subordinates to themselves, else they will make you answer for them; this very measure of calling the Zemindars to Madras will give them a handle for such a turn in their favour. Will not the effect of former mismanagement be laid to your door? If the settlement is on the decline, would it not be prudent to leave the Government, hitherto charged with responsibility, to justify its measures, to work out its *own misfortunes, and bear the censure it deserves?*" In yielding to these suggestions, Sir Thomas Rumbold would doubtless have consulted his personal ease, and escaped much of the persecution to which he was afterwards exposed; but he would have betrayed his trust, and justly have incurred the censure of having paid no attention to another letter from Mr. Sadlier, of the same date, professedly "written in confidence."—"It may be destroyed." In this letter, without any evidence produced, or hint from what quarter the accusation came, Mr. Sadlier states the corrupt conduct of four servants of the Company by name:—three were his predecessors at Masulipatam; the fourth was the Governor of Madras for the time being, who

was accused of sharing the profits (on the occasion of the renewal of the tribute of the Zemindars) with these subordinates.

It was not pretended that these offences had been committed during the government of Sir Thomas Rumbold; the persons no longer filled those stations, and some were in England. It must also be observed that one of the persons accused, (Mr. Whitehill,) if not others, had been concerned in the former suspension of Mr. Sadlier from the Company's service. This confidential letter, which in the Report of the Committee is represented as "official intelligence," Sir Thomas Rumbold did not conceive himself at liberty to disclose. It was not, however, neglected; he ventured with greater determination upon the hazardous task of reforming abuses, without feeling himself justified in prudence or in honour to direct his attack against persons. He stated, however, fairly and distinctly, the nature and consequences of the abuses to the Court of Directors, whose immediate duty it was to institute an inquiry. The honourable Court, however, never expressed the slightest curiosity with respect to the persons by whom the abuses had been committed.

The covenant which Sir Thomas Rumbold

entered into with the Company, bound him to disclose "offences of this nature *that should take place.*" If he were guilty in not disclosing such as were past that came to his knowledge, how did Mr. Sadlier escape, who was bound by the same covenants, and had the opportunity of investigating the evidence? Yet, after two years and a half, when the secret was grown obsolete in his keeping, and Sir Thomas Rumbold, with whom he was no longer on terms of amity, had left Madras, and Mr. Whitehill had been dismissed in disgrace by the Council of Bengal, Mr. Sadlier delivers up the letter. It was not, however, unmutilated. In the form of an affidavit before the Mayor, he declared this to be an exact copy of what he had sent to Sir Thomas Rumbold; but it was found, when compared with the original, to vary in some material points, and such as it was important to his reputation to suppress.

When Mr. Sadlier was removed by a vote of the Board from the seat to which he had succeeded at Sir Thomas Rumbold's departure, this gentleman, distinguished in the Report of the Committee of Secrecy as the "high-spirited and virtuous Mr. Sadlier," made an offer to sell his integrity and public spirit. He told the Presi-

dent that, if he could but be reinstated at the Board, he would bury the letter in oblivion. This offer was disregarded, and he forwarded the paper to the Secretary of the East India Company.*

A few words must be added on the subject of the Zemindars. Mr. Sadlier endeavoured by every means to deter them from accepting the summons to Madras, by apprizing them of the hard terms that would be imposed upon them there; and that the journey would be annual, which was never contemplated by any of the Board. Those objections, which it is stated in the Report were made by them, were found to be the very words suggested to them by Mr. Sadlier.†

The circumstances of this case have been so far entered into on this account. It was one very strongly insisted upon in the Bill of Pains and Penalties. The exaggerated statements of the sums remitted to England, and adopted by the Committee, were made by Mr. Sadlier; although it may be observed, that he never attempted to shape one charge on that score

* See the Minute of the President, C. Smith. Evidences, pp. 298, 299.

† *Ibid.*, p. 232.

against Sir Thomas Rumbold; and to Mr. Sadlier was principally due the disunion of the Council of Madras, that had so fatal an influence on the early conduct of the war.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GUNTOOR CIRCAR, BAZALET JUNG, AND THE NIZAM. THE ORIGINAL POLICY AND INSTRUCTIONS OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL, 1775–1777.

We may now proceed to consider those public measures which have been represented as bearing upon the general affairs of India, and to which it was originally sought to attribute, in great part, if not entirely, what was called the great confederacy, which resulted in the invasion of the Carnatic.

Before entering upon these charges of the Bill, it is important to notice, that in later times it has been still further sought to criminate Sir Thomas Rumbold by laying to his charge the reduction of the French fortress Mahé. This it appears afforded Hyder Ali a subject of complaint, of which he availed himself in order to justify the execution of projects which many circumstances concur in proving had been determined on long before. Ascribing this measure, however, especially to Sir Thomas Rumbold is a late notion. Nobody at the time laid the responsibility upon him. When the war with France was declared, the news was communicated to

Madras through Bombay, and thence to Bengal. It is a fact well authenticated, that it was determined in England that all the French settlements should be reduced, and instructions arrived immediately at Madras to begin with the capture of Pondicherry, if it was considered they had force sufficient to accomplish it.

That the expedition against Mahé was not inconsiderately resolved upon, will appear from some extracts which are here given from the Minutes of the President and of Sir Eyre Coote:—

November, 1778.—"The President recommends to the serious consideration of the Board several points before any expedition should be set on foot for the reduction of Mahé." Among others, "Whether it will not be prudent to wait until we hear from Hyder Ali, and until we have more certain accounts of the disposition of the Rajahs whose countries border upon Mahé, and through which our troops must march? Whether, if the French from the islands, on hearing of the reduction of Pondicherry, should have landed a body of troops at Mahé, before the arrival of our squadron and land forces there, our detachment may not run a risk of being defeated by a superior European force," &c.

Again, on the 4th of January, "The situation of affairs, the distress we are in for money, and the uncertainty of what steps may be taken by the French or the country powers, or, in particular, by Hyder Ali, who does not seem to be well pleased with our conquest of Pondicherry, makes it appear to me imprudent to move from the seat of Government at this juncture."

And on the 14th of January, "Our correspondence with Hyder Ali has not been attended with that readiness on his part which we expected from him; but I am persuaded we should not lose sight of the object, and nothing will so effectually bring it about as sending a suitable person to him. A proper pretence may be made use of, and we shall be able to judge of his intentions. It is better to know him for an enemy than a doubtful friend; and I confess I shall be under some apprehensions for our detachment now proceeding to Mahé, unless we are assured what line of conduct he means to observe." When, after a renewed solicitation from the President that Hyder would allow an interview to take place, the reply was decidedly hostile, it was a subject of serious deliberation whether the expedition should be recalled.

The President set before the Committee all

the most important reasons for and against the recal. He concludes by saying, "I have ever considered the alliance with Hyder Ali as our first and principal object; in that case Mahé would fall into our hands, of course, and every view of the French be entirely frustrated. One circumstance I must add, which is, if we desist from prosecuting the expedition, it is probable the factory of Tellicherry will fall into the hands of the French."

Sir Eyre Coote gave his opinion at length, and concluded by saying, "Upon the whole, as things are at present situated, I am against recalling the expedition," &c.

All the circumstances relating to this affair, with the deliberations of the Council of Fort St. George, are fully and fairly given in the first Report of the Committee of Secrecy.

In the second Report of the Committee, truth and fairness are sacrificed, and the Report becomes a personal censure of Sir Thomas Rumbold.

In the transactions relating to the Guntoor Circar, and the Nizam of the Deccan, in regard to which charges were alleged against Sir Thomas Rumbold in the Bill, and

which remain to be more fully described, Sir Thomas Rumbold was nearly concerned with Mr. Hastings. It is a task which of necessity devolves upon one who would give a true account of this portion of the history, to show, that, among the darker shades which belong to the character of that celebrated man, must be reckoned the conduct he pursued throughout the course of those events.

When the calamity of the Carnatic war took place, the cause of which is a problem in history never entirely solved, if the measures of Mr. Hastings were to be exempted from all reproach, on another the blame must fall.

The policy Mr. Hastings had pursued, whether skilfully devised or not, had been unsuccessful, and, *it was early known to him*, threatened very disastrous results; it had especially compromised him with the Nizam of the Deccan. In the embarrassments in which he was involved, Mr. Hastings allowed himself to disavow, on the most shallow pretext, the part he had originally taken in the affair of the Guntoor Circar, when it was first contemplated in 1775; and also the formal sanction he gave to the Treaty for the cession of it to the Company, as submitted to him by the presidency of Madras in 1779, when

he revised each article, and added to them others of his own. Mr. Hastings thus prepared the way for representing this affair as a principal cause of the confederacy against the English, which resulted in the invasion of the Carnatic.

It is also certain that all the accounts of those times that have been transmitted to us, are to be traced to the representations made by Mr. Hastings to the Court of Directors, and subsequently adopted by the Committee of Secrecy, although they were contradicted by facts and dates that had passed through their hands, and are still to be seen in the Appendices to the Reports.

It is much to be deplored that Sir Eyre Coote, who formed one of the Board of Madras, and co-operated in the affair of the Guntoor Circar, should have been, after the invasion of the Carnatic, so influenced by Mr. Hastings, as to follow and support him in his assertions, and to denounce this measure for a reason that sounds strangely from Sir Eyre Coote, "that it thwarted Hyder, who had views upon the Guntoor for himself." *

* Supplementary Appendix to the Second Report, and repeated elsewhere. In private correspondence of the time there is much proof that Sir Eyre Coote was a man of most honourable and

Leave then the whole responsibility of this affair upon Sir Thomas Rumbold, and admit that it thwarted Hyder, can any further vindication be needed for the policy of securing to the Company this important district, considered the key of the Carnatic, and which was in fact their own, by arming it against him? It is known that Hyder had it in view to extirpate the Nizam, and make a partition of his territories: since Hyder had no claim upon the Guntoor, the possession of it by the English thwarted him, inasmuch as it stood in the way of these projects, and of his immediate design upon the Carnatic.

But Sir Eyre Coote proceeded to a still more extraordinary assertion. In the same letter to the Directors, we find him say, that "it was known as a thing certain that at the time the Treaty was carrying on with Bazalet Jung, Hyder would have entered into an alliance

generous, although sometimes hasty, impulses. It is apparent, indeed, from his angry and reiterated demand, that the refusal of the President of Madras to send a body-guard to Calcutta from the newly-arrived regiment, gave him great umbrage. With all allowance for this, and for the pressure of difficulties opening upon him in that disastrous war, it is still hard to believe that Sir Eyre Coote really dictated the representations we find given in the Reports of the Committee, and which were sent to the Directors, &c.

offensive and defensive with us." * Was it forgotten by Sir Eyre Coote, and did the Secret Committee, in adopting this declaration, overlook, that at this very time, and before this time, the letters from the President to Hyder mentioned above, requesting an interview, &c., had been communicated to the Board, together with Hyder's evasive replies?

A history of these transactions, substantiated by the original documents or by full references, is subjoined.

As far as relates to the affair of the Guntoor Circar, the words are, for the most part, those of Sir Thomas Rumbold, and are a part of his "Answer to the Directors † and to the Committee of Secrecy," of which "Answer" mention has been made. The statement commences by citing those Articles of the Treaty between the Nizam and the Company in 1768, which bear upon the case.

Upon the construction of these Articles, Sir Thomas Rumbold proceeds to say, it is clear

* Supplemental Appendix to Second Report, No. 9, and repeated elsewhere.

† It will be observed throughout the statement given from Sir Thomas Rumbold's narrative, the references made by him are to the Reports of the Committee of Secrecy. The references to the Minutes of Evidence are added by the compiler.

that if Bazalet Jung should raise disturbances, or give protection, or assistance, to any enemies of the Company, the Company were at liberty immediately to take possession of the Guntoor Circar, without any reference or application to the Nizam.

No one Article of the Treaty with the Nizam was so impolitic as leaving the Guntoor Circar in the possession of Bazalet Jung. We had it in our power to make whatever terms we pleased. We had attained a decisive advantage in the war, and, by marching a detachment of troops towards the Nizam's capital, we had in a manner compelled him to sue for peace.

The Guntoor Circar nearly joins to the Cuddapah country. A small portion of the Carnatic runs between them, and, stretching eastward to the sea, contains one of the most commodious ports on the coast, called Mootapillee; it was there the French always landed their troops and stores. This Circar divides the Carnatic from all our northern possessions, which would otherwise run in one continual chain from Cape Comorin to Cuttach; we, therefore, by this concession made to the Soubah, left it in the power of a very doubtful friend to obstruct our communication. The Guntoor Circar contains many strong

posts and small forts in the hands of Government, whereas in all the other Circars the forts are in the hands of the Zemindars; besides which the river Kistna bounds it to the northwards, a river at particular times of the year broad and rapid.

In the year 1775 the Board of Madras, at that time under the Presidency of Mr. Wynch, were justly alarmed by frequent letters from the Council of Masulipatam respecting the French force stationed in the Guntoor, which was receiving continual increase, and was, they represented, becoming dangerous to the settlement. A reference to the numbers 67-78, in the Appendix to the Second Report of the Committee of Secrecy, will show the whole correspondence, and what passed in the year 1775 relative to the French troops and the necessity of obtaining the Guntoor Circar for the Company.

The Committee of Secrecy observe (Second Report, page 284) that, "In the whole course of this correspondence, it appears that the Government of Madras, as well as the Governor-General and Council, never lost sight of the Treaty of 1768; but, on the contrary, that they made the Nizam the principal party in the negotiation." If, however, we examine the correspondence that took place between the two

presidencies, it will appear that the Governor-General and Council are uniform in stating the forfeiture of Bazalet Jung, and our right, in consequence, to take possession of the Circar.

In June, 1775, in consequence of the advices they had received, the Board of Madras first took the matter into consideration, and they agree (*vide* 68, Appendix, Second Report) "to endeavour at obtaining from Bazalet Jung Mootapillee and the other villages, or, if practicable, the whole Circar, at a certain reserved rent to him, which shall be mutually agreed upon for that purpose." And they agree to write to the Governor-General and Council, fully stating every circumstance. In this letter they particularly say, "That the only mode which occurs to us for obviating the damage to be apprehended, is to prevail upon Bazalet Jung, if possible, to give up the port of Mootapillee for an adequate acknowledgment; or, if practicable, the whole Circar upon the same terms; or that he will admit of its being protected for him by the Company, he being at the expense of the force employed on that service. We much doubt that he will be brought to consent to either of the above propositions; but the evil consequences to be feared, should he continue as

heretofore to increase his force, and by such means give the French a permanent footing in the Circar, are too evident to be pointed out." On the 5th of July, the Governor-General and Council wrote an answer to the Madras President, in which they recommend the most spirited measures to be taken, and that the Nizam was to be considered, let it be observed, *only in the second instance.*

"Fort William, *July 5th*, 1775.

"After weighing maturely the subject of the advices, we have come to the resolution that no time is to be lost in endeavouring to remove the French from the Guntoor Circar. It is manifest to us that the number of foreigners entertained there by Bazalet Jung, and the considerable supply of troops, cannon, and ammunition, lately sent there, are in consequence of a concerted scheme with the French to secure to them the possession of that province, and to put them in a condition to attack our possessions in those parts with advantage on the first favourable opportunity. At all events, we deem it highly impolitic to leave the French in possession of the port of Mootapillee, which affords them so free and easy a communication with those coun-

try powers who may be supposed to entertain the greatest jealousy of the growing influence of the British nation. We mean Nizam al Mulck, Hyder Ali, and the Mahrattas.

"For these reasons, and seeing that we have the sanction of a reversionary right for interfering to secure the independency of that district; we authorise you immediately to take such steps as may be necessary for that effect, and recommend that you form a body of troops, if possible in conjunction with the Nabob of Arcot, and march them immediately to the frontiers of the territory of Bazalet Jung. You will then acquaint him that, seeing he has applied for the assistance of foreign troops, those of the Company are come to him for that purpose, as well as to secure the reversion of that Circar to them; that you insist upon the immediate discharge of all foreigners from his service; in failure of which, you will signify to him that your troops will take possession of his country, and that you will endeavour by a negociation with the Nizam, either by the offer of the whole revenues or otherwise, to obtain the immediate cession of it to the Company. This is the measure which suggests itself to us at present as the most expedient in this affair. We do not mean ex-

pressly to direct it, but only to give our sanction to your undertaking it, supposing you should think it advisable, considering the general posture of affairs in the Carnatic.

"W. Hastings,
R. Barwell,
J. Clavering,
P. Francis,
G. Monson."*

Unfortunately, the recommendation of the Council of Bengal was not immediately followed. Time was suffered to pass away in consultations with the Nabob of Arcot and unnecessary debate. From the 4th of April, 1775, when the subject first engaged the attention of the Presidency, no reference had been made to the Nizam. The Board had considered themselves at liberty to treat directly with Bazalet Jung, in the way of amicable negociation. On the 14th of August, General Smith was desired to make a return of the forces in hand; and stated it equal to the object, in case Bazalet Jung should not accept the terms. Yet they hesitated to carry into execution these hostile measures. Some of the Board are of opinion that the Nizam should

* Second Report, Appendix, 71.

be applied to in the first instance, and his influence with his brother (Bazalet Jung) desired, to induce him to dismiss the French troops. They consider, moreover, that an application to Bazalet Jung would be ineffectual to secure their object, as it might lead him to seek the further aid of mercenaries to resist their demand.

On the 13th of September it was resolved to address the Nizam, and a letter was accordingly written to him by the President, in which complaint was made of the conduct of Bazalet Jung, as an infraction of the treaty of 1768. The letter concluded by saying, "When your highness shall have considered the reversionary right which the English have to the Murlayanagur (or Guntoor) Circar, and that they might, conformably to the terms of the Treaty, take possession of that right, you will acquiesce in my insisting upon Bazalet Jung agreeing to one or other of these two propositions:—First, to let to the English the whole of the Circar at an annual rent; or, secondly, to dismiss the Europeans from your service, and trust to the Company for the protection of the country." *

On the 13th of September, the Presidency of Madras also acquaint the Governor-General and

* Minutes of Evidence, p. 344.

Council of Bengal with their having written to the Nizam, with a full statement of their reasons for having done so.* The Governor-General and Council made reply as follows :—

"As we observe you have addressed Nizam Ali Cawn in the terms we had suggested for removing the Europeans out of the Guntoor Circar, and securing the reversion of that district to the Company, we shall wait to hear the result of that letter before we send you any further instructions on this head." †

During a long interval that intervened before the arrival of the Nizam's answer to the application of the Board, the subject was again brought forward by a motion of Sir Robert Fletcher, then Commander-in-Chief, to this effect :—

"That the letter last received from the Governor-General and Council of Bengal, under date of October 23rd, ought not to have prevented our adopting immediately the measure recommended in their letter of the 5th of July, because it appears to me nothing more than an unavoidable acquiescence in the letter this Board had written to the Soubah, (*i. e.*, the Nizam,) without containing anything that can be con-

* Second Report, Appendix, No. 74. † *Ibid.*, No. 75.

strued as an approbation of this Board having declined to follow the idea recommended by the Governor-General and Council. Bazalet Jung's present preparations for war, and his correspondence with the French, give me apprehensions that every delay may add to the evil. I consider the Nizam in his heart as wishing his brother's removal from the Circar; but we should not have put the question to him.........

"Frequent information has been received of the prejudice we have sustained from the encouragement given by Bazalet Jung to the desertion of our Europeans." *........

Other members of the Board take a similar view:—

"We should have sent an immediate force. Bazalet Jung has broken his Treaty. Mootapillee is of essential advantage to us. We must resume it upon the law of self-defence.........Let us adopt the recommendation of Bengal,—take the country first, and make it up to Bazalet afterwards with a rent or pecuniary equivalent." †

This motion was negatived, as is observed in the Report of the Committee of Secrecy, but the

* Minutes of Evidence, p. 353.

† Messrs. Johnson, Mackay, Jourdan, and Brook. Second Report, Appendix, No. 75.

reason is not there assigned; namely, "that, having written again to Bengal, it was deemed expedient to wait the Governor-General and Council's reply." But on the same day a second motion was made for immediate action, when, the Council "finding it difficult to frame a letter agreeably to the different opinions which had appeared in that day's debates, it was agreed that a copy of their proceedings be transmitted to the Governor-General and Council for their opinion."

On the 20th of November, 1775, arrived the first answer from the Nizam; evasive, as had been predicted by Sir Robert Fletcher. Of Mootapillee, not a word; but he has desired his brother to send away the troops, and he will impound the revenue of the villages allotted for their pay. He tacitly admits that what the letter of Madras had imputed to him, and he now offers to redress, was a violation of treaty; for he says, "Our treaty shall be kept to a hair's breadth."

The Board of Madras transmit this letter, which they represent as indirect and evasive, to the Governor-General and Council, and wait their reply. On the 2nd of January, 1776, Lord Pigot having arrived, and taken charge of the

government of Madras, an answer was received from the Governor-General and Council, and was read at the Board. It was very full and conclusive, and is here given at length.

"Fort William, *December* 11*th*, 1775.

"As you have resolved to suspend taking any measures for the removal of the foreigners in Bazalet Jung's service until you receive further instructions from us, we take the earliest opportunity of conveying to you our sentiments, to enable you to proceed without loss of time in this necessary business. In our letter of the 5th of July last, we left it open to you to take possession of the Guntoor Circar, unless Bazalet Jung should immediately consent to dismiss all the foreigners in his service. Without positively directing the measure, we authorized you to carry it into execution, if you should think it advisable, considering the general posture of affairs in the Carnatic.

"By the answer of the Nabob Nizam Ali Cawn to the letter which your President wrote to him on that occasion, we perceive he engages that his brother shall remove his foreign troops from the sea-coast to Adoni, and to stop the revenues of the villages allotted for their pay. If this en-

gagement be fulfilled, and if we are put in possession of Mootapillee, the object of our first instructions will be obtained; if not, we still continue to allow you the same latitude to take possession of the Circar, which we gave you in our letter of the 5th of July. In the first case, we think it proper to assign the revenues of Mootapillee to Bazalet Jung, after defraying the extraordinary expenses which may be incurred by that service; and, in the second case, to grant the revenues of the Circar to the Soubah, [that is, the Nizam, or Nabob, Ali Cawn, now written Ali Khan,] with the like reserve for defraying the expenses: but in either, our yielding up the revenues is founded on the supposition that Bazalet Jung, or Nizam Ali Cawn, respectively, do not oppose you in these operations." *

In the disturbed state of the Presidency of Madras that followed the arrival of Lord Pigot, the matter was suffered to rest here.

* Second Report, Appendix, No. 78.

CHAPTER IX.

THE GUNTOOR CIRCAR, BAZALET JUNG, AND THE NIZAM. PROCEEDINGS AFTER THE ARRIVAL OF MR. (SIR THOMAS) RUMBOLD AT MADRAS, IN 1778.

On the arrival of Mr. (not yet Sir Thomas) Rumbold in Madras, on the 8th of February, 1778, not one step had been taken in this important affair. The Nizam had paid no regard to his promises: although he had engaged (as is observed by the Committee of Secrecy, Second Report, p. 23) that his brother (Bazalet Jung) should remove the French troops, and stop the revenues of the villages allotted for their pay, the engagement was not fulfilled. The possession of Mootapillee, the first object of the Governor-General and Council's instructions, was not obtained; consequently the same latitude from the Governor-General and Council to take possession of the Circar still remained; and the giving any part of the revenues, either to the Nizam or Bazalet Jung, was to depend on "neither of them, respectively, opposing our operations."

From the time of the arrival of Lord Pigot,

the Government of Madras, almost wholly engaged in attending to the contentions of the Nabob of Arcot and the Rajah of Tanjore, had ceased to regard the growing influence of the French to the northwards. It cannot but appear extraordinary that the Governor-General and Council, who saw the affair in so serious a light, whose duty it was to watch over the power of our national enemies, and to preserve the peace of India, should have suffered above two years to elapse without inquiring what had been done with respect to the instructions they had sent. But the ruinous scheme of subjecting the Mahratta State to their views, and the contentions of their own Board, in consequence of the many expedients resorted to, distracted their attention from dangers, which, although at some distance, were always to be apprehended.

If the removal of the French force in the employ of Bazalet Jung, and the attainment of the Guntoor Circar, had been thought objects of so great importance by the Presidencies of Bengal and Madras, in time of profound peace, of how much more importance must the affair have appeared to Mr. Rumbold, with advice of a certain war, and under all the circumstances of the case!

Hyder Ali was known to be in alliance with the French, and the Soubah Nizam Ali was more in their interest than ours. Hyder had taken advantage of our troubles with the Mahrattas to stretch his conquests to the northward, and wanted only the Guntoor to open to the French the prospect of becoming formidable in that part of India, where their influence before the peace was very great, and where they still had many attached to them.

Accordingly, on the 10th of July, 1778, the President entered a Minute on the subject in the Military Department. So far was Mr. Rumbold from entirely setting aside or passing by the Nizam, notwithstanding that he had failed in every engagement, and that the Governor-General and Council's letter of the 11th of December, 1775, would have authorized the Presidency, in consequence of that failure, to have possessed themselves immediately of the Guntoor Circar, that he particularly recommended that, in the first instance, a letter should be written to him on the subject.

The Committee of Secrecy, indeed, observe at page 24 of their Second Report that, on the 10th of January, 1778, (a month before Mr. Rumbold's arrival out in Madras,) "The President

and Select Committee expressed their conviction of the evil tendency of the influence of the French with Bazalet Jung." This, however, is a mistake, as there was then no Select Committee. It was, as has been said, on the 10th of July, 1778, that Mr. Rumbold entered a Minute to that effect, fully stating every circumstance that had come to his knowledge relative to the French troops, and the necessity of putting an immediate check to their growing power. The Board concurred unanimously in this opinion; and it was resolved that a letter should be written immediately to the Soubah Nizam Ali Cawn on the subject, which was done accordingly.

The whole of the Governor's Minute is given in the Appendix, No. 79, in the Second Report of the Committee of Secrecy; but no notice is taken in the Report of the letter written to the Nizam in consequence *

It was resolved also that Captain Barclay, the Commander at Ongole, be directed to stop all Europeans going into the Guntoor Circar, and send them to the Presidency.

The Nizam never answered this letter.

* This letter to the Nizam is in the Minutes of Evidence, p. 365.

The siege of Pondicherry took place soon after it was written; and he waited to see the event.

In less than a week after this resolution had been taken by the President and Board of Madras, orders arrived from England for forming a Select Committee, with extensive powers for transacting all political affairs on the coast of Coromandel, and for commencing hostilities against the French; and, if the Select Committee found, upon a review of the naval and military force on the coast, that they were equal to the attempt, they were to begin with the reduction of Pondicherry. Sir Thomas Rumbold states, that Sir Eyre Coote, being called upon before he left England, gave it as his opinion that the force upon the coast would not be sufficient for the purpose.

Upon receipt of the Company's orders, measures were taken to accomplish an object of so great importance. Troops were called from every part to form a sufficient army; and now the mistaken policy of suffering the French troops in the Guntoor Circar to remain and strengthen themselves, as they had done, was very manifest. Instead of following the spirited and proper directions of the Governor-

General and Council, the Government of Madras had contented themselves with trifling debates and unnecessary letters, to which they received trifling answers and professions meaning nothing. Without calling the chief part of the forces from the Circars, we had not sufficient to attempt the siege of Pondicherry; and, consequently, our northern possessions were subjected to some risk, especially from the French troops under Mons. Lally, who were ready to take any advantage of our defenceless situation in those parts.

They were now evidently supported by the Government of Pondicherry; and Mons. de Bellecombe furnished all the officers under Mons. Lally with commissions from the French king. It was thought necessary to form a detachment of all the remaining troops at the disposal of the Company that could be spared from the different garrisons to the northward, leaving in them a scanty number of raw recruits, scarcely enough, indeed, for the common duty. The command was given to Major Mathews, an approved officer, and he was ordered to watch the motions of Mons. Lally's party, and to prevent his making any irruption into our northern territories. Notwithstanding this detachment, Mr. Rumbold was not free from apprehensions of

Mons. Lally's party * proving too strong for the force at his disposal, and requested of the Governor-General a reinforcement, to insure the safety of our northern possessions.

It was Sir Thomas Rumbold's impression and belief, to the best of his recollection, that the Select Committee of Madras wrote to the same effect. Mons. Lally, however, did not think proper to risk his force against the detachment under Major Mathews. Pondicherry fell before the Company's troops; and after the surrender of Pondicherry, the French factory at Mahé, and the French force to the northward, formed the only interest of that nation remaining in India, and both became objects for the attention of the Madras Government.

Successful measures were taken for the reduction of Mahé; and the removal of the French from the borders of the Circars, by depriving our national enemies of the prospect of establishing a footing in that quarter, was undoubtedly a point of greater consequence than even the reduction of Mahé. Having possession of

* The numbers of the party under Mons. Lally are underrated, as described by Mr. Mill; they consisted of three thousand two hundred and fifty, of which above five hundred were Europeans. —Evidences, p. 361.

the Guntoor Circar gave a certainty of excluding the French from any communication either with Bazalet Jung, the Soubah, or any of the Rajahs or tributaries to the northward. It was impossible to divine that the Bengal Government would persist in the ruinous war with the Mahrattas, at the hazard of our own security in every part, and under such circumstances of hostility with the different powers of Europe as rendered it probable the French would endeavour to recover their footing in India.

After the surrender of Pondicherry, Bazalet Jung sent a Vakeel to Madras, and, of his own accord, proposed the delivering up of the Circar, and dismissing the French troops from his service. This was a point the two Presidencies had been long labouring to obtain; and nothing but insanity could have led the Presidency of Madras to decline the offer. Mr. Rumbold acquainted the Board, on the 30th of November, with the proposal made by Bazalet Jung, (*vide* No. 80, Appendix, Second Report,) and at the same time gave his sentiments on such articles as he judged might form the foundation of an agreement to be made with him. These articles were transmitted to Bazalet Jung, the 22nd of December, for his consideration. A letter was

agreed at the same time to be written to the Governor-General and Council, advising them of Bazalet Jung's proposal for a Treaty with the Company, and of the answer we had sent to him, and desiring their opinion on the subject.

The part of the letter relative to the Treaty with Bazalet Jung was as follows:—

Extract of a letter from the Madras Presidency to the Governor-General and Council, dated December 31st, 1778.

"On referring to our records we observe that in the year 1775 several letters were written to you from this Presidency on the subject of the French troops in the service of Bazalet Jung, stationed in the Guntoor Circar, and supplied with warlike stores through the port of Mootapillee. It appears, however, that this business was not prosecuted by this Government further than by a correspondence with Nizam Ali Cawn, which ended in nothing. As we are thoroughly convinced of the necessity of removing these troops from the service of Bazalet Jung, we have lately taken up the subject again, and having received certain proposals from him relative to the Guntoor Circar, we returned such an answer to them as we thought necessary for the occa-

sion. We now enclose copies of those papers for your information. By letters from your Presidency, dated July 5th, and December 11th, 1775, we find ample authority from you to the former Government to proceed in effecting the dismission of the French troops by Treaty, or in any other manner they might think proper. As so much time has elapsed since, we have thought it necessary to apply to you again on the subject, and request you will be pleased to favour us with your sentiments upon the articles we have proposed to Bazalet Jung, and your sanction, if you approve them, to enter into a Treaty or agreement with him.

"THOMAS RUMBOLD,
EYRE COOTE,
HECTOR MUNRO,
J. WHITEHILL,
C. SMITH."*

The Nizam had taken no notice of Mr. Rumbold's letter to him of the 10th of July; but after the reduction of Pondicherry, he was written to again to acquaint him with that event, and to express the President's surprise that he had not answered his former letter.

* Appendix, Second Report, No. 81, 82; Evidences, p. 369.

This produced a reply, which, however, was not received until the 4th of February, 1779; and this letter was still more evasive than those preceding.*

"I persuade myself," says Sir Thomas Rumbold, "I have now fully shown that it was not possible to effect the removal of the French through the means of the Nizam, who was himself a favourer of them, and that nothing was hastily or wantonly undertaken by the Presidency of Madras; but that they acted on the most mature consideration, with the view entirely to remove the influence of the French from Hindostan."

The Governor-General and Council's answer to Mr. Rumbold's letter of the 31st of December, is dated the 25th of January. They perfectly understood at that time the full extent of President Rumbold's letter to them. They make no mention themselves of the Nizam. Bazalet Jung alone is the person to be treated with. They comment particularly on each article separately. Some they correct. The letter is as follows:—

"In regard to the alliance proposed to be formed with Bazalet Jung, we highly approve of

* See Minutes of Evidence, pp. 366, 365.

the measures in general, and leave it to you to negotiate and finally conclude a Treaty with him. That you may be acquainted with our sentiments, as far as the materials supplied by you will enable us to form them,* we shall make such remarks upon the different articles which you have proposed to Bazalet Jung as occur to us on the perusal of them.

"Firstly. Quota of troops of every denomination to be maintained by the Company for the service of the chief, should be mentioned. And these are recommended to be restricted as much as possible to natives, that your European force may not be weakened by this alliance.

"Secondly. The subsidy for them should be fixed at the utmost expense that will probably be incurred, and the surplus or deficiency ought to be on the part of the Company.

"Thirdly. That the troops should be confined

* Of these cautious expressions the Governor-General afterwards availed himself when he denied his participation in this transaction; but was there any deficiency of information? It has been shown that the Board had in 1775 forced every circumstance upon his attention, and all their difficulties with regard to the Nizam, and he had cut the knot and repeated the recommendation before given. By a reference to dates, it will appear that Mr. Hastings's measures had already brought him into difficulty with the Nizam; did he so early provide for future contingencies?

to the defence of Bazalet Jung's country is proper.

"Fourthly, &c., &c., &c.—proper,—proper, &c."*

It might have been thought incredible that a public body, like the Council of Bengal, liable thus to be detected from their own records, should pretend that when they "gave their assent to this Treaty being concluded with Bazalet Jung, they had no more of the proceedings of the Madras Presidency before them than what was contained in the letter of the 31st of December, 1778." Yet this is what actually happened.

"Before I proceed to state what follows," says Sir Thomas, "I shall beg leave to introduce an extract from the Governor-General and Council's letter, dated October 10th, 1780, when they began to be alarmed for the consequences of their ill-judged Mahratta war, and the distress they had brought upon the Company by exhausting their treasure and resources, and dividing their forces, in the most wanton and inconsiderate manner, and which induced them

* All the articles are thus revised and approved in detail by the Governor-General and Council. See Appendix, Second Report, No. 82.

to the mean attempt to deny their own acts, in hopes of deceiving the public, and turning off their attention from the real cause that threatened the loss of Asia to the British Empire." *

"It is true," says the Governor-General, "that in our reply to your letter of the 31st of December, 1778, wherein you first mentioned the Treaty with Bazalet Jung, we gave our assent to it generally, which by no means implied that extent of latitude which you have taken, but required to be used with reference to the condition on which it had our original sanction, and which, without any declaration on your part, or any authority expressed on ours, ought always to be understood as the superior, indispensable, and permanent condition, in all negotiations, and in all acts of Government, the faith of Treaties actually existing.

"The following extract of a letter from this Presidency, dated October 23rd, 1775, is introduced here, as proof what our sentiments then were on this subject, and is a part of the correspondence quoted by you, as conveying 'ample authority to the then Government to proceed in effecting the dismission of the French troops from the service of Bazalet Jung,' by Treaty, or

* Sir Thomas Rumbold's Manuscript Defence.

in any other manner they might think proper :—

"'As we observe you have addressed the Nabob Nizam Ali Cawn through your President, in the terms we had suggested, for the removal of the Europeans out of the Guntoor Circar, and for the purpose of obtaining his consent for the reversion of that district to the Company, we shall wait to hear the result of that letter before we send you any further instructions on that head.'"

"When, therefore, we gave our assent generally to the terms of the Treaty marked out in your letter of December 31st, 1778, we had no more of your procedings before us than what you had chosen to make known to us in that letter, and those formed, of course, the limits of our approbation.

"We knew not that you had wholly omitted the Nabob Nizam Ali Cawn in the negotiation; we could not, therefore, authorise what you had concealed from our knowledge.

"You have made orders for commencing hostilities, and you have negotiated and concluded a Treaty of peace, without the consent and approbation of the Governor-General and Council first obtained. But as soon as we were ac-

quainted with it, and were enabled to give it our attention, we declared our disapprobation of it, and then first interposed our authority, to prevent it from taking effect, by requiring the instant surrender of the Circar of Guntoor." *

So writes Mr. Hastings towards the close of 1780. Nevertheless, the evidence and extracts we have already given prove incontestably that the Governor-General and Council had distinctly authorised the Madras Presidency to take possession of the Guntoor Circar by force, if Bazalet Jung did not comply with the demands made on him. Bazalet Jung had not complied with those demands; and the Government of Madras was empowered, after taking possession of the Circar, to withhold all the revenues of it, both from the Nizam and Bazalet Jung, "if either of them, respectively, gave opposition to the measure."

Nothing can show more clearly the light in which the Nizam was held by the Governor-General and Council, than the instructions given to Mr. Elliot, when he was sent to treat with the Rajah of Berar, dated July 18th, 1778, wherein it is said: "The Nizam Ali Cawn has always

* No. 100, Appendix to Second Report of Committee of Secrecy. The date of this Letter is October 23rd, 1780.

been connected with the French, and is now in close union with the Ministers at Poona." * And so little attention did the Governor-General and Council pay to existing Treaties, that in these instructions to Mr. Elliot, one of the conditions by which was to be purchased the friendship of the Rajah of Berar, was the recovery of the conquests which had been made from his country by the Soubah Nizam Ali. "For the whole of this proceeding," says Sir Thomas Rumbold, "I refer to the Bengal Records, now in the India House."

Mr. Hollond, when deputed to the Nizam from the Madras Presidency, was particularly directed to state fully to him what had passed relative to the Guntoor Circar with his brother, and to endeavour to obtain his good offices for the completion of the arrangements proposed with respect to it. This Mr. Hollond neglected to do.

By these instructions Mr. Hollond had an explicit authority and direction to communicate the Treaty to the Nizam, and to procure his concurrence.†

* Sixth Report, Appendix, No. 76.

† Instructions to Mr. Hollond, (Appendix, No. 85,) and also a letter from the President to the Nizam, in which he refers him to Mr.

It is said in the Second Report, page 24, that "on the 22nd of April, much about the time of concluding the Treaty with Bazalet Jung, instructions were given to Mr. Hollond," &c., &c.

Here is a double misrepresentation. The Treaty was not signed until on or after the 12th of May, 1779. (See Appendix, No. 95; also No. 105.) Mr. Hollond had left Madras in February or March; his instructions were completed the 25th of February. As to Mr. Hollond's vague assertion, "that he was informed that it would be useless for him to mention the agreement with Bazalet Jung," (which forms an allegation in the Report,) not saying by whom he was told, or where, Mr. Hollond was never so told by the President or the Committee, and his statement is in absolute contradiction to his instructions.*

Hollond for full explanation respecting the Guntoor.—Evidences, p. 373.

In a letter from Bazalet Jung to the President, given in the First Report, Appendix, No. 36, he complains, that "the person sent by the Company to His Highness did not endeavour to reconcile this business to him, which might have set aside all his doubts." For further and fuller explanation as to Mr. Hollond's instructions on this and other points, the reader is referred to the next chapter, p. 130.

* Appendix, No. 95; also No. 100. Also Consultations, Appendix, No. 112.

It is made a ground of complaint that the Treaty was concluded in April, yet that the Governor-General and Council were not advised of it until December. A letter from the President and Council to the Governor-General, acquainting him with troops being sent to Bazalet Jung, in consequence of the late negotiations, which was substantially a communication of the completion of the Treaty, (this letter is dated April 23rd, 1779,) concludes with desiring the Governor-General and Council to favour the Presidency with their sentiments and determination upon the matter contained in it as soon as possible. Yet to this no answer was ever sent.*

The seventh charge of the Bill, that offence was given to Hyder by the march of the troops over part of his dominions, may here be noticed, but need not detain us long. It is sufficient to say that the pass through which the troops were to go was an open pass, previously to the recent possession obtained by Hyder; but yet the passage through his country had been anxiously guarded against, and was only resorted to as a matter of absolute necessity; † that there was

* Evidences, p. 385.

† "Every subaltern in the army might have known" (the Directors say) "that by crossing the Kistna twice, Hyder's terri-

no expectation of opposition from him; * and furthermore, that, to avoid all cause of offence, Colonel Harpur was directed, before his march, to give notice to Hyder's managers of the district, and acquaint them with his objects and destination. The last order to Colonel Harpur, directing him to proceed, unless he should meet with great or insurmountable obstacles, was countermanded.

In Sir Thomas Rumbold's defence, as given substantially from his own manuscript in the last chapter, he does little more than point to the different articles of the evidence that had passed through the hands of the Committee of

tories might have been avoided." But Bazalet Jung, in a letter to Colonel Harpur, says, (Evidences, p. 392, dated June 26th, 1779,) "I have received your arzee, in which you informed me that you had received a letter from the Governor, ordering you not to march by any road through Hyder Ali's country, or that of the Nabob Nizam ud Dowlah, but to march by any other road, if there is any. The rivers are swelled. It is proper you march by the Gaut of Atcoor; you would otherwise be obliged to cross two or three rivers. The road of Atcoor is now clear and free, as I wrote to you, since Hyder's people have left it. But as the Governor has wrote in this manner to you, I have made inquiries for another road. The head Hircarrahs of the Circar have been sent to conduct you," &c., &c.

* Appendix, No. 36.

Secrecy. With this complete chain of evidence before them, with a knowledge of the correspondence between the Board of Madras and Mr. Hastings in 1775, and again in 1779, could that Committee honestly assert that, under the directions of the Governor-General, "the Nizam had been made throughout the principal party in the negotiation?"

Let it here be added, and be noted, that the Court of Directors were constantly advised of the measures of the Presidency with regard to Bazalet Jung, as is fully set forth in the Appendix, Second Report.

When apprized of the conclusion of the Treaty of 1778, the Court of Directors commended the conduct of the Presidency as "very meritorious," and "the hints given by the Governor-General as very judicious."

Nevertheless, one of the Resolutions brought forward in the House of Commons, declared the whole affair to have been "a gross breach of solemn Treaties, which stained the national honour, and that Sir Thomas Rumbold was thereby guilty of a high crime and misdemeanour." And to this was added in the allegation of the Bill, that "it was done in a clandestine, treacherous, irregular, and unjustifiable manner;" but, as the framers

of the Bill could not quite overlook that it had been sanctioned by the Governor-General, they ascribe to him some mental reservation. "But it doth not appear," the Bill says, "that the said Governor-General intended, by such approbation, to authorize concluding the said Treaty without first obtaining the consent of the Nizam."

In Mr. Hastings's private correspondence, as given by Mr. Gleig, he writes this version of the story (vol. ii., p. 331):—"The Circar of Mortazanagur, (or Guntoor,) forcibly taken by the Presidency of Fort St. George, in violation of the Treaty of 1768, has been returned to its proprietor, and other means taken to conciliate the Nabob Nizam Ali Cawn, who was upon the point of declaring war against us, and was the original author and instigator of the conspiracy planned for our extirpation." *

* We may open these pages and find much that is similar. An account, written by Mr. Hastings to Lord Shelburne, is thus prefaced:—"I will avail myself of the credit which I believe I possess with your Lordship for veracity, and of the sure means which you have of detecting me if I part from it, by affirming, without a long train of argument to prove it, that I have never in a single instance broken the faith of a Treaty.......I affirm, also, my Lord, that the invasion of the Carnatic was not caused by the Mahratta war, but by the known weakness of the Carnatic; the dissipation of its forces, its poverty caused by private embezzlement, and by a

How much truth there was in the first of these assertions has been shown; nor is any more credit due to the second, "that the Guntoor had been returned to its proprietor;" or, as it is expressed in the Bill, "And whereas, on the 12th of June, 1780, the Government of Bengal wrote a letter to the Select Committee of Fort St. George, notifying their resolution to reinstate Bazalet Jung in the Guntoor Circar, and requiring their immediate compliance; and Bazalet Jung was accordingly reinstated," &c., &c.

Bazalet Jung never was reinstated; he was shuffled out of sight. We only hear that he died two years afterwards.

The Governor-General, no longer so scrupulous of Treaties, disregarded the faith pledged to Bazalet Jung, which might, at all events, have demanded some equivalent; and the Guntoor Circar was suffered to remain in the hands of the

general confederacy formed against all the governments in India,—a confederacy which was the avowed act of the Nabob Nizam Ali Cawn, *and declared by him to have been prompted by a consideration for his own security against the menaced hostilities of the Presidency of Fort St. George;* that his reliance on the faith and justice of this government had induced him to withdraw his support from this confederacy," &c.

Nizam, even after Lord Macartney had formally desired to address him, and claim the possession of it for the Company.

With regard to the third assertion of Mr. Hastings, that the Nizam was the author of the confederacy for the extirpation of the British from India, this part of the history is involved in much obscurity. Possibly the truth was better known to Mr. Hastings than to most others, since it appears he had very early knowledge of the existence of this confederacy.*

* Letter from the Governor-General to the Directors, Appendix, Sixth Report, No. 309.

CHAPTER X.

THE TRIBUTE TO THE NIZAM OF THE DECCAN.

It was made a charge against Sir Thomas Rumbold, that he solicited, through his ambassador, a remission or abatement of the tribute which the Company had bound themselves to pay for the Northern Circars.

The often repeated story of the tribute to the Nizam of the Deccan may be more fully understood by tracing it directly from the Appendix to the Second Report of the Secret Committee, than in following the continuation of the manuscript portion of Sir Thomas Rumbold's "Answer to the Committee;" or as it appears in the Defence by Mr. Hardinge, which is based upon it.

Before entering upon this subject, attention should be drawn to the low state of the Madras treasury, and the difficulty experienced by that Presidency in meeting the daily exigencies of the service. This will be found described, in some degree, in the extracts from letters to Bengal, and to the Court of Directors, which are placed at the end of the volume.

From the manner in which this subject has been treated, it might be supposed that the demand made for succour from Bengal was from the private resources of that Presidency; whereas it was a point admitted, that the other Presidencies should, at their need, be supplied from the richer treasury of Bengal.* At this time, when war was impending, it had been enjoined that especial assistance should be afforded to Madras by Bengal.

There is one occasion on which Mr. Mill, in his history, has leaned to the side of justice with regard to the Presidency of Madras. It is where he speaks of the exaggerated representations made by Sir Eyre Coote, on his return to Madras, after the invasion of the Carnatic.

"Not deficient, either in the virtues which inspire affection or command respect, Sir Eyre Coote, as he was somewhat disposed to enlarge

* Extract from Letter to Bengal.—Evidences, p. 506.

"*London, August* 31*st*, 1778.

"As hostilities have actually commenced between Great Britain and France, and as we think it probable that our servants on the coast of Coromandel may stand in need of assistance from you, we direct that you fail not upon their application to send them such assistance in money, or otherwise, as the exigence of the case may require.

"G. Wombwell," &c.

in praise of himself, so was somewhat apt to indulge in complaint of others. In the letter which, after his arrival in the Carnatic, he addressed to the Directors and to the Ministers of the King, he drew a picture, in the darkest colours, not only of the weak and disastrous condition into which the country was brought, but of the negligence and incapacity, if not the corruption and guilt, of those servants of the Company under whose management such misfortunes had arrived. It was, however, much more easy to point out what it was desirable should have been performed, than, with the defective revenue of the Presidency, to have performed it. That Presidency had repeatedly represented, both to the supreme Council and to the Directors, their utter incapacity, through want of money, to make any military exertion; and by both had been left to struggle with their necessities. It was the poverty of the Carnatic, and the unwillingness of all parties to act as if they believed in that poverty, much more, it is probable, than the negligence or corruption of the government, which produced the danger by which all were now alarmed."

But Professor Wilson, in his edition of Mr. Mill, has not let this pass. To a certain extent

he has been very candid; and, from his observation of the evidences in defence of Sir Thomas Rumbold, has vindicated him from some of the charges which Mr. Mill has brought forward, fresh from the hands of the Directors; but had Professor Wilson followed up this course, he would necessarily have inculpated Mr. Hastings, between whom and Sir Thomas Rumbold there must unfortunately be always an antagonism. From this point, therefore, Professor Wilson closes his eyes upon the Evidences, and with a disregard of the acknowledged fact, which was also proved and brought forward in one of Mr. Dundas's Resolutions, before the House of Commons, by a calculation based upon the last twelve years,* "that the revenues of the Presidency of Fort St. George were barely sufficient to support a peace establishment," Professor Wilson makes this comment upon Mr. Mill's statement, (chap. v., p. 143):—

"If the poverty of the Madras Presidency was the consequence of mismanagement and corruption, it only aggravated their culpability. The resources of the Carnatic were sufficient, if protected against the prodigality of the Nabob, the rapacity of his European adherents, and the

* See Parliamentary Records, vol. xxii., p. 1318.

ignorance and venality of the Company's servants, to have maintained the Presidency in a posture respectable, if not formidable, to its neighbours."

It was at this time of extreme embarrassment, when, as was afterwards described by Sir Thomas Rumbold in the House of Commons,* "the troops having been paid for one month, he knew not from whence the money would be supplied for the month following;" that three applications were made by the Nizam for the discharge of the tribute for the Northern Circar. This tribute had fallen into arrears before Sir Thomas Rumbold entered upon the government, and, with the current tribute, amounted to a sum the Presidency was unable to pay.†

While some writers have sufficient acquaintance with the earlier part of the history to agree, that "the view taken by the Governor," when he described this tribute as "unjust in its origin, and a sacrifice of the rights of the Company, was supported by reason," yet it is said, "The application of it can only be characterized as dishonest and disgraceful."

* "The army consisted of thirty thousand men. It required sevenlacs a month to pay them."

† See Parliamentary Register, vol. xxii., p. 1285.

Had these writers explained wherein the conduct of the Governor was dishonest and disgraceful, and what method they would have recommended in this case, it would have set their own opinions in a clearer light; but the best way is now to tell the true story of the facts, with the attendant circumstances:—

The Nizam had demanded the payment, and it has been shown that there were not the means of satisfying his demand. From Bengal, in answer to a statement of this very difficulty, the Government of Madras were told that no assistance could be afforded. Sir Thomas Rumbold knew that his administration was shortly drawing to a close. He might possibly have evaded the payment a little longer, and left it to his successor to battle with the difficulty. But the time seemed favourable to throw off so heavy a burden; altogether, if possible; or, at any rate, to make an effort to reduce the amount. The time appeared favourable, because, from bad seasons, and other causes, the revenue of the Circars had fallen so short, that this formed a reasonable plea for urging the remission at this juncture. The time appeared favourable, also, because the Nizam had, by his conduct, infringed the Treaty which assured this tribute to him, and

the Presidency of Madras might have been justified in withholding a payment which, they had grounds for supposing, would furnish an enemy with means to be used eventually against themselves.

The method pursued was, in fact, what had been drawn out by the original negotiator of the Treaty (General Cailland).

In a letter, on record,* he stated "this concession to the Nizam as purely nominal, calculated more for homage and flattery to his pride, than recompense or payment; and that he" (General Cailland) "entertained no manner of doubt, that when an opportunity may offer, to make *the giving it up an act of his own*, he will no longer persist in it." †

It had been deemed necessary, on several accounts, to depute a person to the court of the Nizam. The person selected for the mission was Mr. Hollond, in whose good faith Sir Thomas Rumbold appears to have placed entire reliance, and also to have entertained a high opinion of his abilities, since much discretionary power was intrusted to him.

* "Extract of a letter from General Cailland, Fort St. George Military Department, December 8th, 1766."—Evidences, p. 397.

† See also Mr. Hardinge's Defence of Sir Thomas Rumbold.

Mr. Hollond was instructed to "explain what had taken place with Bazalet Jung, relating to the Guntoor Circar;" and he was the bearer of a letter from the President to the Nizam, in which he was especially referred to for a full explanation on that point.* He was also to endeavour to obviate any unfavourable impression that might have been caused by the march of a large body of troops from Bengal, across the country, to Surat. The conduct of the Nizam, in having hitherto disregarded the repeated demands made to him, to obtain the dismission of the French troops from the service of his brother, was so great an infringement of his engagements, that the Presidency of Madras deemed it a sufficient reason to allege for the payment of the tribute having been delayed. Mr. Hollond was desired to give this explanation, and, at the same time, to assure the Nizam, "that, *in full confidence of every satisfaction being given with regard to the French troops*, the money should be duly paid."

Mr. Hollond was also directed "to convey every necessary information to the Governor-General and Council as well as to them." In a subsequent letter, Mr. Hollond was desired "to endeavour to engage the Soubah to take part in

* Evidences, p. 374.

defence of his brother, and to promote in him a disposition favourable to their views." Great stress has been laid upon the direction given to Mr. Hollond to make this assurance of payment, on his first arrival at Hydrabad; while "yet the same Board, by subsequent credentials to the same Ambassador, insisted upon the remission of the tribute."

There is much fallacy in this representation. The Board never did insist upon the remission; and the conditional assurance of payment was not inconsistent with a request that the creditor would remit the debt. It must be remembered that the assurance was expressly declared to be upon condition "of full satisfaction being given with regard to the troops in Bazalet Jung's service;" and that this was immediately followed by a communication from Mr. Hollond, that the French troops had only left their former position, to be received by the Nizam himself.

When apprized of this fact, a strong remonstrance was addressed by the Council of Madras to the Nizam. The President wrote to this effect: "I observe what your Highness has said relative to the French troops lately dismissed from the service of Bazalet Jung. Your Highness may well remember that repeated applica-

tions were made to you to obtain their dismission; but it is certain that point was not effected until we engaged with Bazalet Jung to supply him with a body of our own troops, on the express condition of his discharging every Frenchman in his service. Having taken so much pains to remove the people of that nation, with whom we are at war, from the territories of Bazalet Jung, I cannot help expressing my concern, that these same people should find protection and service from your Highness. Our wish was, that they should have been dispersed, and sent out of the country; but if your Highness entertains them, they are very little, if any thing, further removed from us, than they were at Adoni; and by being kept together in your Highness's country, they are nearly in the same condition to do us mischief. I beg your Highness will understand me. I have the utmost confidence in your attachment to the Company, but I fear it is not in your power to prevent these people corresponding and intriguing with their countrymen, to our prejudice; and as it is not conformable to the Treaty, that your Highness, who is in alliance with the Company, should openly encourage and protect their enemies, I hope you will cause them to be sent

out of the country, which will be a strong mark that your Highness desires to live on terms of the strictest friendship with the Company." *

Mr. Hollond was also enjoined to urge, " that as the French were then the avowed enemies of the British nation, they should be directed to proceed to the sea-coast, that we might send them, with others of the same nation, now our prisoners, to their native country." " We desire you will use your endeavours to effect their removal," says the President to Mr. Hollond, " since we cannot but consider them now in the same point of view nearly as when they were employed in the service of Bazalet Jung." †

It may be affirmed, that had the negotiation not been wrested out of the hands of the Presidency of Madras, and had Mr. Hollond been guided by them, and pursued their instructions

* Evidences, p. 425.

† See a letter in Bengal Secret Correspondence.

Extract from a letter from the Nabob of Arcot.—Evidences, p. 432.

" The conduct of the Nabob Nizam Ali Cawn wears an unfriendly appearance, since he has positively refused to dismiss the French from his services, and, on the contrary, has settled a lac of rupees per month for the pay of that body, together with five thousand country infantry attached to them; and, placing the greatest confidence in them, makes them the advanced body of his army."

with fidelity, at the worst, an immediate payment of the tribute would have been justly made the price of Lally's banishment from the Guntoor: whereas, the result of the interference of Bengal was, that the Nizam, pretending to guard the enemy's force, connived at their escape into Hyder's quarters, the most fatal event of the war at that early period.

In every letter, even during the disagreement that followed, Sir Thomas Rumbold did not cease to urge, both to the Governor-General and to Mr. Hollond, the importance of the removal of the French troops, although he ceded all further attempt with regard to the tribute.

For a right understanding of the case, the President's Minute, and the instructions given to Mr. Hollond, should be referred to.

They state that "the original grant of the tribute to the Nizam, in 1766, was a most improvident and lavish concession to him.* He had

* Of the Treaty here described, Colonel Wilks speaks as follows:—

"It is difficult to contemplate, without indignation, the government of Madras resuming their grovelling position of tributary dependents for the Circars, upon Nizam Ali; who, on the condition of receiving a further tribute of seven lacs of rupees, graciously ceded his claim to a territory which he neither possessed, nor had the most distant hope of ever possessing;......and Nizam Ali re-

paid no value for it. In 1768 he treacherously joined Hyder against us, having engaged us in a war with him on his account. We had lawful possession of the Circars, by virtue of a grant from the Emperor; a possession free and unfettered. The Nizam put shackles upon it, and imposed the humiliating terms of this annual tribute, as a return to him for his confirmation of a right, which he had no pretence to dispute." *

It was to this feature of the case alone, that Sir Thomas Rumbold alluded, when he disputed the title of the Nizam to the tribute; whereas it is asserted in the Bill, "that he controverted that right, as established by two successive Treaties."

But the words of Sir Thomas Rumbold, when proposing the subject in his Council, are these:—"My ground is, that he (the Nizam) would not have been entitled, in 1768, to the tribute, if due attention had been given to the firmaund which had invested the Company with full possession of the Circars, as an unconditional gift, inde-

turned to his capital, with abundant cause for self-gratulation, on the address which had relieved his complicated embarrassments." —Wilks's "South of India," chap. xv., p. 56.

* Instructions to Mr. Hollond.—Evidences, p. 115.

pendent of the Nizam, or any other control."

"The same firmaund that gave the Circars to the Company, gave the Carnatic to the Nabob of Arcot, free from all tribute or demands whatever. In the Treaty with the Nizam of 1768, the Nabob of Arcot received the Carnatic, exactly conformably to the tenor of the firmaund; but the Company are burthened with an increasing tribute, and one of the Circars is allowed to remain for life with the Nizam's brother."

Mr. Hollond was directed to state to the Nizam that, "Till within the last two years, the Presidency had been enabled, by means of long uninterrupted peace and tranquillity, to pay His Highness the amount of the tribute regularly; but since it had been increased from two lacs to five, many circumstances had rendered it too heavy for the Company to bear. Among these, the great expenses of the war with the French, the necessary provision, in consequence, for the security of the Circars, and the failure of the revenues, may be mentioned as the most considerable." "If by these, and such other arguments as shall occur to you," proceed the instructions, "the Soubah can be brought to a favourable disposition with regard to the tribute, we wish

you to represent to him how great a mark of his friendship it would be considered by the Company; and how ready they would be, on all occasions, to come into the views of his Highness, and to give him proofs of their friendship and attachment."

"Although our wishes extend," the letter proceeds to say, "to the entire remission of the tribute, we confess, without something of importance to tempt him, we can hardly expect the Nizam will be brought to so great a concession: but we hope we may obtain that to which we have a just claim, which is a considerable abatement in the amount. We would have you try to reduce it to its former standard; and try to learn if there are any points in which the Soubah wishes a compliance on the part of the Company that *may be acceded to, in return for his giving* up his claim to the peishcush [tribute].

"If it should be thought necessary, from the disposition of the Nizam, or by [reason of] circumstances unforeseen by us, you are to vary this representation, and as we cannot flatter ourselves that the Nizam will be brought to remit the tribute entirely, including the arrears that are due, we would have you make trial of the

following propositions, as you may deem expedient." *

Four propositions are then specified, giving different modifications with regard to the remission or reduction of the payment, so as at any rate, if possible, to bring it down to the more moderate standard of the first six years. But the letter proceeds to say:—"Should the Soubah reject these propositions we have laid down, you must in that event acquaint him, *that the Company will pay the balance with the current tribute, as soon* as they are in cash." On the subject of the four propositions, and the final promise to pay all, if no better terms could be made, no discretion was left to Mr. Hollond; the instructions were absolute, and they were disobeyed.

Mr. Hollond is said to have left Madras as soon as his instructions were completed, on the 25th of Febuary; but he did not arrive at Hydrabad until the 6th of May. This was never explained. On the 9th of May, Mr. Hollond wrote to both presidencies.† Besides other things mentioned in his letter to Madras, he represented the Soubah (or Nizam) to be much averse to his remaining with him. To the Governor-General he wrote the same; adding,

* Evidences, p. 141. † Appendix, Second Report, No. 86.

however, "If you should be of opinion that my residing here can be attended with any advantage to the Company, some steps that may be conducive towards procuring the Soubah's assent, will, no doubt, suggest themselves to you. The Soubah conducts his business in his own person; and as I am allowed free conference with him, without the intervention of an interpreter, I can pledge myself for a faithful communication of any representations you have to make to him upon the public interests."

From this, it appears that some previous understanding had taken place between the Governor-General and Mr. Hollond, and that the latter expected he would have more work upon his hands than that with which he was entrusted by the Governor of Madras. Henceforth the communications between the Governor-General and Mr. Hollond were indeed strictly private, of which, it will be seen, that Mr. Hastings did not fail to take advantage.

It is remarkable throughout the whole of this transaction that, while every expression made use of by Sir Thomas Rumbold in confidence to his agent and minister, Mr. Hollond, and in his Council,* was delivered

* The words of Sir Thomas Rumbold, which afforded so much

up to the Governor-General, and subsequently paraded in the Report of the Secret Committee, and formed into an allegation of the Bill; not

advantage to his enemies, were not in the instructions given to Mr. Hollond, who was then at Hydrabad, but were addressed to the Board. On this occasion, he might have said, in measured language, "This must be regarded as a matter of diplomacy. We must court the present favour of the Nizam by stating the claim it will give him to our favour in return. We must give him to understand that he is now offending us by the support given to our enemies; that we are at present in alliance with him, and in amity, but formidable if provoked to hostilities." This is what was in effect said, but in a briefer and more familiar manner, as between confidential parties. "We must soothe and work upon his apprehensions, as occasion may require." Neither could the latter phrase be applied otherwise than in relation to the possible persistence of the Nizam in retaining the French troops, since, in reply to the representation made by Mr. Hollond of the Nizam's displeasure, he was desired to explain that the request was urged as "a matter of pure favour; that there was no intention to infringe his rights, or offer threats." The other expression quoted, "The Nizam, with all his blustering, will much fear a rupture with the English," was in answer and in echo to Mr. Hollond's own suggestion, when he described the Nizam's language as "idle menaces, which he should disregard."

After the affair of the Guntoor and the tribute had been made to serve the purpose of damaging Sir Thomas Rumbold, it all at once assumes a very quiet place in history. *The tribute to the Nizam was never paid;* the Governor-General being no more able probably to pay it than the President of Madras had found himself.

one syllable of Mr. Hastings's communications with this same agent was ever given to the public.

We hear much of the important services ren-

Mr. Mill gives an account of the manner in which the restoration of the Guntoor to the Company was subsequently effected. Lord Cornwallis had orders to obtain the restitution of it; but it was supposed the Nizam would not relinquish it. "The resolution being taken," Mr. Mill says, "the execution was skilfully planned. Captain Kennaway, a gentleman whose address was supposed well calculated to soften what might appear offensive in his commission, was sent to the Court of the Nizam, instructed to employ conciliatory language, and to show the utmost liberality in regard to every other point respecting which adjustment was required. No intimation was to be given to the Nizam of the proposed demand till after the arrival of Captain Kennaway at his Court. At the same time instructions were sent to the Residents at the several Durbars, of the Peshwa, Sindia, and the Rajah of Berar, to give to these powers a full explanation of the proceedings before intelligence of it could reach them from any other source. The Government of Madras, under specious pretences, conveyed a body of troops to the neighbourhood of the Circar, and held themselves in readiness to seize the territory before any other power could interpose, either with arms or remonstrance."—Mill's History, vol. v., p. 225.

If, when this manœuvre was so skilfullv planned by Lord Cornwallis and his Council, every expression that was made use of on that occasion had been recorded for the benefit of the public, we might have had a chapter as long and quite as pithy as that bestowed upon Sir Thomas Rumbold.

dered by Mr. Hollond on that occasion, but not when the negociation began, or what it was all about; just as much is told as suited the purposes of Mr. Hastings, and that in the manner he pleased.

The letters written to Madras by Mr. Hollond,* giving an account of his mission, are so full of inconsistencies and contradictions, particularly the two last, that they can scarcely fail to give an impression that he was acting a false and double part. Although he describes in strong colours the displeasure with which the proposition relative to the tribute had been received by the Nizam, all Mr. Hollond's arguments addressed to Madras tend to induce the maintenance of it in its fullest extent. Mr. Hollond gives a very particular description of the poverty of the Nizam's military resources, and the general weakness of his government. "There cannot be anything to fear from the Soubah's resentment........I am, therefore, more inclined to keep my first ground, and disregard his menaces. I have always remarked his not carrying into execution those which related to my dismission from his court........In the visit I had paid his Highness I had not made known to

* Appendix, Second Report, Nos. 118–120.

him your first proposition. I thought it better to keep up this concession,* in order to give a check as much as possible to His Highness's expectations; neither did I think it necessary to yield after receiving the message above stated, believing it to be an artifice His Highness employed to drive me to make such further propositions as I might have to propose. The situation of our affairs with regard to the Mahrattas gives him great alarm. His Highness is apprehensive that our establishing Ragonaut Row in the possession of the Poona Government is but a prelude to our attacking his own possessions........ He has determined, I have been informed, to join heartily with the Poona administration, and, consequently, against us."

Mr. Hollond represents that "the credit the Soubah derives by receiving tribute from the Company, is by far a greater object with him than the amount of the sum stipulated," and, nevertheless, urges upon the Presidency to make a proposition, still further calculated to irritate the Nizam, and also little suitable to their present exigencies, namely, that a considerable sum

* [The meaning seems to be,—*to keep silence upon the concession;* or, perhaps, *not to yield, not to go under, as to this concession, to keep up.*]

should be paid down to him, but under a different denomination. Finally, Mr. Hollond adds, "that, as the Nizam would probably take the line of uniting with the Poona Ministers, and breaking with us, it will be necessary to be very sure of his intentions before paying him anything."

On the 3rd of September following, Mr. Hollond enclosed to Bengal the whole correspondence that had taken place between him and the President of Madras, accompanied by a few lines of apology for not having sent it before, and which concluded by saying, "The Soubah talks of taking the field as soon as the rains are over." *

We are told by Mr. Hastings, and his statement was adopted by the Committee of Secrecy, and has been repeated ever since, that this was

* It is a curious anomaly that, while the communication of this correspondence to Bengal by Mr. Hollond was justified on the ground of the instructions, given to Mr. Hollond by the Presidency of Madras, "to communicate with both presidencies," Sir Thomas Rumbold should at the same time have been arraigned for his concealment and clandestine conduct with regard to Bengal. Mr. Hastings went farther than this; he made it a subject of complaint that he was not apprized of Mr. Hollond's appointment. A refutation of this may be seen in the letter from Madras to Bengal of the 7th of February, 1779.—Second Report, Appendix, No. 121.

the first communication between him and Mr. Hollond since Mr. Hollond's letter of the 9th of May, written when he first arrived at Hydrabad.

If it could be supposed that, with the important matter which it will appear there was to be discussed with the Nizam, no communication could have taken place between the Governor-General and Mr. Hollond during this interval, the supposition would be contradicted by the fact that Mr. Hollond made mention in a letter to Madras, dated the 31st of August, of some intelligence the Governor-General had written to him; and also by the reason assigned by the latter for desiring Mr. Hollond to remain at Hydrabad, when recalled by the Presidency of Madras, which was, "that he should remain for the purpose of negotiating some affairs to be adjusted between them."

But, further, if the delivering up of this correspondence (at the very juncture when Mr. Hollond, if he had conformed to his instructions, would have ceased to urge the requisition which led to the interference of Mr. Hastings) had not been a concerted plan, it would be difficult on any other supposition to account for Mr. Hollond's entire departure from the line of conduct laid down for him by the Presidency of Madras,

with the reason he alleges for having done so, especially when we find Mr. Hollond's reasoning repeated almost in the same words by the Governor-General in his Minute * to the Board, and subsequent letters. The Governor-General and Mr. Hollond agree in this extraordinary assumption, that the request which had been made, and which they are pleased, altogether without warrant or reason, to convert into a "positive demand, to be eventually supported by violence," was one which could not be relinquished; and, therefore, the Governor-General professes to deem it more consistent with the "credit" and "influence" of the Government of Madras, that he should interpose his controlling authority, than that the requisition should be withdrawn, in the manner designedly left open by the instructions given to Mr. Hollond.†

We are not, however, left under any uncertainty with regard to the understanding which had subsisted between the Governor-General and Mr. Hollond. From some inadvertence, apparently, a paragraph of a letter, written soon after

* Governor-General's Minutes, October 25th, 1779; Evidences, p. 122; and Letter, p. 125.

† Appendix, Second Report, No. 122; Governor-General's Minute.

by Mr. Hollond, appears in the Appendix to the Second Report of the Committee of Secrecy, No. 133, in which he actually reminds Mr. Hastings that he has been unfaithful to his immediate chief, and false to his instructions, and claims Mr. Hastings's protection on that account. The words stand thus :—"As I consider my character to be in danger of suffering by the measure adopted by the Madras Board, I hope I shall be justified in recommending to your particular attention my having kept up the negotiation in a tone beyond the extent of my orders; by having adhered rigidly to my first proposition, although I was fully authorised to offer others more favourable........The approbation of my conduct, which you have been pleased to express in your letter of the 30th of November, I shall always consider as a very particular honour."

For all these services, the Governor-General did not fail to requite Mr. Hollond by eulogies and recommendations on all sides; "by requesting his acceptance immediately of a gratuity of ten thousand rupees, with extra allowances," &c.*

It is not necessary to inquire into all the motives which actuated Mr. Hastings in his dealings with Sir Thomas Rumbold. One is

* Sixth Report, p. 1055.

sufficiently obvious, and is proved by the advantage he afterwards drew from it. The displeasure of the Nizam had been greatly excited by the measures pursued by the Council of Bengal, in supporting that party of the Mahrattas to which the Nizam was strongly opposed. He had complained of it as a breach of the Treaty subsisting between the Company and him, and declared that his engagements would oblige him to take a hostile part against them.* "It seems," he had written to the Governor-General, "that you are not acquainted with the Treaty which the Governor of Madras had contracted with me. The Treaty to which I allude declares that my enemies are the Company's, and the Company's enemies mine; that the Company shall not protect the enemies of my Government, and in like manner I shall not protect the enemies of theirs." To Madras he had written, "It seems that the Nizam of Bengal [the Governor-General] is unacquainted with the Treaty, as I have received repeated advices that the design of establishing Ragonaut Row, the inveterate enemy of my government, is again taken up, and that he is levying armies, &c.....

"As I am inviolable in my engagements, and

* Evidences, p. 431.

am bound by a firm Treaty to Pundit Purdhaun, it becomes my firm duty to give him my assistance. It was necessary to intimate these particulars to you; and I have accordingly done so."*

But the Nizam had still more serious cause of displeasure. He was, at the time that Mr. Hollond was at Hydrabad, acquainted with the fact before mentioned. By means of a letter addressed to Mr. Elliot from the Governor-General, which was intercepted at Bundercund,† it was discovered that the Council of Bengal had sought the alliance of the Rajah of Berar, on the condition of aiding him to recover the territories obtained by conquest from him by the Nizam. The knowledge of these circumstances might, naturally, have led Mr. Hastings to desire that no additional cause of complaint should be given to the Nizam, at this juncture, by the Presidency of Madras. By a fair representation to that Presidency, and by affording some relief to their present embarrassments, all would, probably, have been adjusted. But Mr. Hastings took another line: he saw all the advantages the situation offered to himself; he knew (these are his own words afterwards addressed by him to Sir Thomas Rumbold) that, "in case of a

* Evidences, p. 431. † Sixth Report, Appendix, No. 154.

supposed breach of treaty, the world seldom listens to a long tale;" * and he not only availed himself of the opportunity to conciliate the Nizam, by the surrender of both the objects Sir Thomas Rumbold had endeavoured to obtain, but he also succeeded in making him the ostensible cause of the Nizam's displeasure, and thus averted from himself the reproach of all the mischief that had already been the consequence, and might still further ensue, from the measures he was at this time pursuing. How far, in addition to his disobedience to the instructions given him, Mr. Hollond, by his dealings with the Nizam, drew from him those expressions of resentment which so well served the purpose of the Governor-General, or whether these were genuine, there are not means of ascertaining; but one feature in all this duplicity is sufficiently attested. In the Sixth Report of the Committee of Secrecy, and in the Appendix to the Second Report, No. 139, in the "Minute of Mr. Johnson," on the subject of recalling Mr. Hollond, it is said that Sir Thomas Rumbold made mention of "some things having come to his knowledge with regard to Mr. Hollond's conduct at Hydrabad," which are not

* Mr. Hastings's Letter to Madras. Evidences, p. 131.

further explained. Mr. Hardinge, in his "Defence of Sir Thomas Rumbold before the House of Commons," when speaking on this part of the subject, notices this affair in these terms:—"We have upon the records of this period a letter to Bengal, written by the Nizam, and altered by Mr. Hollond." This fact is explained in the Briefs given by Sir Thomas Rumbold to his Counsel, which Briefs still exist; and are now deposited, with the other documents belonging to the case of Sir Thomas Rumbold, in the British Museum; and which state that he had in his possession copies made by Mr. Halliburton, (who was sworn Persian translator,) and attested by him as translations of the letters originally written to the Governor-General, and to the Governor of Madras; and also, as they were altered, and then sent to their destination, Mr. Hollond having taken out two or three passages from each, and inserted others. Mr. Halliburton also sent to Sir Thomas Rumbold a copy, translated by himself, of a letter from the Nizam to Fazet Beg, his Minister, to whom he sent the whole correspondence with Madras and Bengal, telling him, at the same time, that "from these letters Mr. Hollond had taken out two or three paragraphs, and written what he thought would

be more proper; and, in that manner, they had been despatched." I think no person can read the letters as they stand, so singularly apt for the purposes of Mr. Hastings, without coming to the conclusion that they had been tampered with: but this public assertion of the fact by Mr. Hardinge must be considered sufficient evidence, since it was open to be challenged by either of the parties concerned, by Mr. Hastings and Mr. Hollond, or by Mr. Halliburton. This did not properly enter into the Defence, but it is important as a further confirmation of what has been asserted with regard to the unworthy means resorted to throughout this transaction.

The negotiation with Madras being at an end, Mr. Hollond could no longer be retained as Resident at Hydrabad. The Nizam was written to from Madras in terms of conciliation and "regret that he should have attributed to hostile intentions a request that had been urged on the plea of friendship that subsisted between him and the Company, and a fair representation of the failure of the revenue of the Circars." He was assured that, as soon as their treasury would admit, the payment should be made good. Also, that since there seemed no further occasion Mr. Hollond should remain at the Nizam's Court,

the "President had directed him to return; but that, should His Highness have the intention to send any one of his own people to Madras, he should be received with pleasure; and every attention paid to the representations he might make in His Highness's name, in order to preserve inviolate the harmony subsisting between him and the Company." *

In reply to this letter, the Nizam professed himself "satisfied on the score of the peishcush, and was willing that a person might be sent back along with Mr. Hollond, or else that gentleman should be sent back alone." †

The Governor-General had need that Mr. Hollond should remain at Hydrabad. He therefore declared to his Board, "that the suddenness of the recall of Mr. Hollond had excited the suspicions of the Nizam; and also that he desired that his place might be supplied by a similar appointment from their Government; which, the Governor-General considered, following instantly Mr. Hollond's recall, would have too visible an appearance of disunion between the two Governments." ‡ A letter was consequently addressed to Madras, requesting that gentleman might be

* Evidences, p. 459. † *Ibid.*, p. 436.

‡ *Ibid.*, pp. 149–151.

"permitted to remain in quality of their Minister" [*i. e.*, Minister from Calcutta and the Governor-General, not from Madras] "at the Court of the Nizam, for the purpose *of negotiating such points as remained to be adjusted between them.*"

It appears that the Governor-General had found it expedient to resort to much misrepresentation of facts, in order to gain the concurrence of the Board for this interference. Mr. Hastings begins with this false assertion:*— "That the payment of the tribute to the Nizam, being the effect of solicitations and importunity on our part, this consideration would render doubly criminal the attempt to wrest it from him." And, further, the desire said to be urged in the letter of the Nizam, "that a person should be sent from Bengal to reside at his Court," is not to be found in the letter in question,† or any other given to the public; and may, therefore, be considered as supplied by Mr. Hastings. On the mode of interference, the Governor-General had said he "would forbear to offer any opinion, but leave it to the judgment of the Board;" it was, nevertheless, accomplished by himself, and in the most offensive manner.

* Evidences, p. 130; Governor-General's Minute, p. 124.

† This letter is given in full in the Appendix to the Second Report, No. 128.

Mr. Hastings then affects some scruples about retaining the servant of another Presidency; but, in the mean time, sends Mr. Hollond his credentials, and gives him his reasons for appointing him to be Resident from Bengal at the court of the Nizam. These reasons are of a piece with the rest of this transaction, and are thus prefaced :—

"We enjoin you to remain at Hydrabad, in the quality of our Resident; as you shall answer for the consequences of your departure to the Court of Directors. We are thus pointed in our injunctions, because the order for your recall may be repeated before the President and Select Committee are in possession of our letter to them, requesting that you may be allowed to continue. Several additional motives weigh with us in conferring this appointment upon you.

"1st. Our desire to manifest to Nizam Ali, and to the other powers of the country, *that a strict union of principles and measures subsist between the Company's Presidencies; which we think will be apparent from the mutual selection of the same agent to negotiate the affairs of Bengal and Madras.*

"2nd. Because, the President and Select Committee of Fort St. George having made choice of

you, and furnished you with particular instructions suited to their own situation and circumstances, you will be better acquainted with the relation in which they stand to the Nabob Nizam Ali; and, of course, more likely to attend to the general and combined interests of both Presidencies, since theirs is the more immediately concerned, than a person immediately deputed from Bengal," &c., &c.

"Inclosed you will find proper credentials you may produce to the Nabob."

"*To Mr. John Hollond.*

"Whereas it has been judged proper to appoint a Minister on the part of this Government to the Court of the Nabob Nizam Ali Khan, to treat with his Highness: we, the Governor-General and Council," &c., &c.

The recall of Mr. Hollond was repeated during the interval by the Presidency of Madras, but the Governor-General had provided for this emergency. Of course Mr. Hollond did not obey it.

Sir Thomas Rumbold was then on the point of leaving India. He gave his opinion at the Board that, if Mr. Hollond persisted in disregarding the orders of the Presidency, whose

servant he was, he ought to be suspended from their employment.*

Whether this was an intemperate act on the part of Sir Thomas Rumbold, or whether it was justified by the circumstances of the case, is open to the judgment that may be passed upon it.

Although the appointment from Bengal of a resident Minister within the jurisdiction of Madras, was equally a breach of the regulations of the service, as to have retained him there contrary to the directions of that Presidency, this suspension of Mr. Hollond, it is stated, relieved the Governor-General from all his scruples, and gained for the public the benefit of Mr. Hollond's services; and it formed a paragraph in the Bill of Pains and Penalties that, "Whereas, in consequence of such peremptory orders, Mr. Hollond *must have* left the Nizam at a time when a Resident at his court was of the utmost importance to the Company's affairs; if, in conformity to Sir Thomas Rumbold's recommendation, a few days before embarking for England, the members of the Select Committee, except Mr. Johnson, had not suspended Mr. Hollond from the Company's service, and so left him at liberty to con-

* Evidences, p. 152.

tinue with the Nizam as Resident from the Government of Bengal," &c.

It was thus this juggling work was devised at Calcutta, and finally carried out in the Committee-room of the House of Commons.

After the invasion of the Carnatic by Hyder Ali, Mr. Hastings found the ground prepared; it was then he coined the phrase so often repeated and adopted in the Reports of the Secret Committee.

"If the extorted and palliated confession of the Nabob Nizam Ali Cawn may be credited,—and we have the evidence of the utmost notoriety to confirm it,—it was the sole effect of a confederacy formed at his instigation, and dictated by his resentment of the infringements made by the Select Committee of Fort St. George on his rights, obtained by the Treaty subsisting between him and the Company, and his natural apprehension of hostilities intended by that Government against him." *

By whom was this confession extorted, and who gave it notoriety? The whole affair was conducted between the Governor-General and Mr. Hollond; and it rests alone upon the verbal assertion of Mr. Hastings. He has not even produced a line in confirmation of it from

* [The letter from which this is taken is given at length on p. 161.]

his supposed informant and witness, Mr. Hollond.*

* Memoirs of Warren Hastings, Rev. G. R. Gleig, vol. iii., p. 12. A letter is inserted in the correspondence of Mr. Hastings, as published by Mr. Gleig, in order, it is said, to show the "open frankness of his style, and his personal regard for Mr. Hollond;" in which the Governor-General refers to a letter he had had the pleasure of receiving from Mr. Hollond, giving the detail of a conversation he had with the "Nabob Nizam Ul Moolk, upon the subject of the confederacy which had been formed against our nation, and of which he acknowledged himself to have been the author,......and charging Sir Thomas Rumbold with having compelled him to it by his threats and actual infringements of the Treaty subsisting between him and the Company." "Your letter," proceeds Mr. Hastings, "was laid before the Board; but, by some accident, has been mislaid, as neither the original nor duplicate, after a long search, can be found in the office. I shall esteem myself greatly obliged if you will send me an attested copy of it in duplicate, as it is of the utmost consequence to the defence of my public character against the attempts made in England to charge me with having been the occasion of the present war in the Carnatic. What I recollect of the Nizam's declarations is so full and absolute a confutation of this aspersion, that I believe it will require no other.

"I am, with great esteem, yours, &c."

"*Fort William, March 6th*, 1782."

It appears, however, that Mr. Hollond did not supply Mr. Hastings with what he required. The original and the duplicate, strange to say, were both missing, and Mr. Hastings was never afterwards able to obtain anything like a copy of the "extorted and palliated confession of the Nabob Nizam Ul Moolk."

CHAPTER XI.

THE EVIDENCE OF MR. FRANCIS AS TO THE CAUSES OF THE WAR IN THE CARNATIC.

[Of the ten charges specified in the third chapter, as having been advanced against Sir Thomas Rumbold in the Parliamentary "Bill of Pains and Penalties," nine have now been answered, the ninth having relation to the recal of Mr. Hollond from his embassy to the Nizam. The tenth charge laid the blame of the unprepared state of the Carnatic, at the time when Hyder Ali began his war against the English, to the door of Sir Thomas Rumbold. Miss Rumbold's answer to this is contained in the following important chapters, which relate to the causes and to the commencement of the war in question.]

Although confronted by his own previous communication, made to the Directors on the 19th of November, 1779, that he knew of the completion of the confederacy against the English in June, 1779, Mr. Hastings wrote on the 2nd of December, 1780, the letter from which a paragraph was quoted on the last page but one:—"All the fair hopes which I had built

upon the prosecution of the Mahratta war to its termination in a speedy, honourable, and advantageous peace, have been blasted by the dreadful calamities which have befallen your arms in the dependencies of your Presidency of Fort St. George, and have changed the object of our pursuit, from the aggrandizement of your power to its preservation. If the extorted and palliated confession of the Nabob Nizam Ali Cawn may be credited, (and we have the evidence of the most public notoriety to confirm it,) it was the sole effect of a confederacy formed at his instigation, and dictated by his resentment of the infringements made by the Select Committee of Fort St. George on his rights, obtained by the Treaty subsisting between him and the Company, and his natural apprehensions of hostilities intended by that Goverment against him." *

Notwithstanding their disregard of dates, the Committee of Secrecy appear to have been under some difficulty in adapting this representation, that the Presidency of Madras was the cause of all the calamity, to the circumstances of the case. The account in the Report is, in consequence, rather contradictory.†

* Sixth Report, Appendix, No. 328.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 336–338.

"The resentment of the Nizam," the Report says, "appears during this year to have been more inflamed by the proceedings of the Madras Presidency than by any immediate allusion to the Mahratta war, *except* in his letter received the 24th of February, which states the cause of his displeasure on account of Ragonaut Row. The Governor-General and Council thought it necessary to endeavour to appease him; yet were apprehensive to appear to form any confidential connexion with him, lest it might tend to alienate from them the Court of Berar. It was, however, afterwards found expedient to appoint Mr. Hollond to be Resident there; and they thereupon declared that he had been the means of preventing the breach of the alliance between the Company and the Nizam: and it has appeared, by a letter from Mr. Hollond, under date the 18th of August,* that, although he avowed his connexions with the Courts of Poona and Berar, and declared his having formed the intention, in conjunction with them, of making an attack upon the Company's possessions, yet Mr. Hollond nevertheless believed him, upon the whole,

* We do not assert that no letter of this date is in the Reports of the Committee; but a very careful search has not been effectual in finding such a one.

inclined to remain on pacific terms with the Company, provided that some satisfaction was given him with regard to the Guntoor Circar and the peishcush.......Your Committee have found that, at the close of this year, the Governor-General took occasion to express his sentiments to the Secret Committee of the East India Company, that the occasion of the Mahratta war was planned and executed without the knowledge or previous concurrence of the Bengal Government, who had no further participation in it than by providing, by an extraordinary exertion, for the support of Bombay, if it succeeded, and for its preservation, if it failed.

"For the occasion of the war in the Carnatic he accounted by the following explanation:—'If the extorted and palliated confession of the Nizam Ali Cawn,'" &c., &c.

If we turn to the Supplemental Appendix, Second Report, No. 9, it will be seen that the "Governor-General's sentiments" are there again embodied in a letter to the Directors, still on "the authority of Mr. Hollond's communications," and also Hyder's invasion ascribed to his views being thwarted of possessing himself of the Guntoor, and the *fears he naturally entertained for the safety of his own country!*

This is followed by a still more extraordinary assertion made by the writer,—that, to his certain knowledge, at the time the Treaty was carrying on with Bazalet Jung, Hyder would have entered into a Treaty offensive and defensive with us. Was it forgotten that at this very time, and before this time, letters were laid by the President before the Board, in which he solicited further communication with Hyder, and his evasive replies?

Amid the confusion of statements that has arisen, in great part, from the desire of charging Sir Thomas Rumbold with being the occasion of all the mischief, it is desirable to trace what real indications are to be found regarding the hostile projects of Hyder Ali, and the period when they were formed.

In the evidence given by Mr. Francis in the House of Commons there is a confirmation of that part of the story, which represents the Nizam to have been the author of the confederacy, although Mr. Francis assigns an earlier date and different motives from those alleged by the Governor-General.*

When, as it will be seen, Mr. Francis said, "that

* Evidences, p. 449.

the Mahratta war was the cause of the invasion of the Carnatic, without which it would not have happened," he gave this merely as his opinion, which, from his known hostility to Mr. Hastings,* and disapproval of his measures, may be questioned by those who are so inclined; but when Mr. Francis declared the fact, that Mr. Hastings apprised the Directors of the alliance formed against the English, with the date of that alliance, which was anterior to any offence given by the affair of the Guntoor, or the tribute to the Nizam; when Mr. Francis declared this before the House of Commons, before the Directors, and in the lifetime of Mr. Hastings, this evidence as to matter of fact must be admitted as conclusive.

Question to Mr. Francis. "Do you know of

* On the subject of this acknowledged hostility, a comparison is sometimes drawn between "the nobler indignation of Burke and the personal antipathy of Francis." If the zeal of Burke was "purer, and proceeding from an elevation of mind few men can understand," the antipathy of Francis need not be resolved solely into the extreme malignancy of his disposition. To be in contact for years, and a witness of the trickery and double-dealing of this extraordinary genius; to be "forced to acknowledge with sullen and resentful candour that there was no contending against the pen of Hastings;" would powerfully draw forth the evil passions of a man's nature.

any transaction between the Government of Bengal and Mr. Elliot, resident at Berar, concerning the Nizam?"

Answer. "His instructions contained an article that had a very material relation to the interests of the Nizam. It was to this effect:—As an object likely to excite the ambition of the Rajah of Berar to take part with us, it was proposed to join with, and assist him in attacking the Nizam, for the purpose of recovering certain districts and countries which before had been conquered by the Nizam from the Government of Berar. Mr. Elliot's business was remarkable, and could not be concealed; and undoubtedly it attracted the attention of all India. But there is a passage in a letter from one of the ministers of Berar. It must have been written in September, 1778. It is printed in one of the Reports of the Secret Committee. It is from the minister of Berar to the Governor-General.* 'The fame of the strict connexion between you and the Rajah of Berar has been everywhere spread, and has convinced Pundit Purdhann Peshwa and the Nabob Nizam at Mulck, that in contracting such a friendship you have the most extensive views, which apprehension has

* No. 152, Appendix, Sixth Report.

filled them with dismay.'* I did on the 16th of November, 1778, and at all times, declare in Council, that the proposed alliance with Moodajee Boosla (Rajah of Berar) would amount to a declaration of war against the Nizam, whenever it should be accomplished."

" *Question.* Whether, upon the whole, any bad consequences arose from the application to the Nizam for the remission of the peish-cush?

" *Answer.* It naturally gave him offence, and furnished him with a pretext for complaining; but he had unquestionably taken his resolution before that, on other grounds; and I don't apprehend that the requisition for the remission of the peishcush had any material effect on the general affairs of India.

" *Q.* State to the House whom you consider to be the author of the confederacy of the Indian powers against the British authority in India.

" *A.* I consider and have no doubt but that it was the Nizam of the Deccan. He formed the confederacy, which has since appeared, between the Governments of Berar, of Poona, Hyder Ali, and himself; but before that time each of those

* This letter appears to have been dated July 11th, 1778.

powers was in a state of enmity, if not hostility, against the rest.

" *Q.* Whether you think the Nizam's conduct proceeded from the demand of the remission of the peishcush, from the protection given by the English to Ragonaut Row, from the jealousy arising from the march of so large a body of troops from Bengal to Surat, or from what other cause?

" *A.* The demand for the remission of the peishcush was subsequent to the date of that confederacy. The Nizam, I have already said, must have been offended with the requisition; but he had already taken his measures on other grounds. He at all times remonstrated against our connexion with Ragonaut Row, and declared explicitly to the Government of Bengal, that if we persisted in it, he should be obliged, in consequence of his Treaties, to take part with the Poona Government against us. The march of the detachment might further excite his suspicions; but I principally impute his conduct to our connexion with the Rajah of Berar, and from the danger he apprehended from that connexion to himself. . . . . .

" The witness begs leave to state to the House that he before omitted to mention an extract of a letter from Bengal to the Court of Directors, of

November 30th, 1778, which is in No. 154 of the Appendix to the Sixth Report of the Committee, respecting the Nizam being acquainted with our correspondence with the Rajah of Berar, which extract is as follows: 'A letter to the Rajah of Berar from this Government, on the occasion of Mr. Elliot's appointment, happened to be intercepted in Boondelcund, and immediately transmitted to Poona: that durbar and Nizam Ali being in this manner apprised of its contents, wrote to demand the real intentions of Moodagee respecting us.'

"*Q.* Do you mean that the Mahratta war was the sole cause of the war in the Carnatic, and that no conduct of the Government of Madras could have prevented it?

"*A.* I have given it as my opinion that it was the cause, the *sine quâ non,* without which it would not have happened.

"*Q.* Whether the great number of forces sent from the coast of Coromandel to the coast of Malabar, to support that Mahratta war, may not be described as one of the great reasons of the invasion of Hyder Ali?

"*A.* It certainly weakened the defence of the Carnatic, and of course encouraged Hyder Ali to attack it.

"*Q.* What was the date of the confederacy between the Nizam and the other Indian princes?

"*A.* It appears by a letter from the Governor-General to the Court of Directors, *that he was informed, that that confederacy already existed, and was completed in June*, 1779.

"*Q.* What was the date of the message from Poona to the Nizam?

"*A.* It must have been between the date of the letter I before alluded to, written to the Directors, and the date of Mr. Elliot's appointment; that is, between July and November, 1778.

"*Q.* As the Government of Madras had orders from the Directors to support the Government of Bombay in their proceedings in the Mahratta war, and the Governor-General and Council made a strong requisition for the troops to be sent to General Goddard, for the support of his operations, whether the Government of Madras would not have been liable to very severe censure had anything fatal happened to the troops under General Goddard, from their refusal to obey such pointed requisitions?

"*A.* That detachment was ordered under a

false pretence.* It was ordered under the pretended and false purpose of defending Bombay against a French invasion: the real object was to increase the force under General Goddard at Surat. If any sinister event had happened, of course the blame would have laid on Madras.

"*Q.* Do you think that any effectual precaution could have been taken by the Madras Government against the invasion of the Carnatic?

"*A.* I have represented the Mahratta war as the *sine quâ non* of the invasion. Other causes may have operated to influence Hyder Ali. I doubt much whether any precaution which the Presidency of Madras could have taken would have prevented the invasion; but of this I am not a competent judge. To prevent an invasion and to resist it are two different things. I look upon Hyder's purpose to have been formed, at all events, in consequence of his engagements with the confederates, and upon a view of the distress we had brought upon our affairs, and

* Letter from the Governor-General to the Presidency of Madras, dated August 2nd, 1779. From the President of Bombay to Madras, dated October 31st, 1779. From the President of Madras to the Governor-General, dated October 30th, 1779.

which had very considerably operated already from our contest with the Mahrattas.

"*Q.* Is it, then, your opinion, that the power of the English at Madras was not sufficient to intimidate Hyder Ali from making the invasion of the Carnatic?

"*A.* I think not, as it then stood reduced; but this is matter of opinion, in which I may be mistaken."

CHAPTER XII.

THE FIRST CAUSES OF HYDER'S HOSTILE PROJECTS 1778–1780.

But there is general testimony to the fact, that Hyder's projects were of earlier date than the confederacy attributed to the Nizam.

Hyder was known to be in correspondence with M . Bellecombe, the French Governor of Pondicherry, before the siege in 1778. This is confirmed by the following extract of a letter from the Nabob of Arcot to the Governor-General, received September 21st, 1779.*

"War breaking out in Europe between the courts of Great Britain and France, we lost no time in getting possession of Pondicherry, which Hyder was prevented from succouring by several reasons. At the time the siege was opened, he was employed against the Fort of Chatuldwick, the chief of which was his most considerable opponent; he was also so ill at that time as to

* Sixth Report, Appendix, p. 229.

leave little hopes of his life; the Mahratta army was on that side of the river Kistna; and, to crown all, it was the season of the rains. By these reasons alone he was prevented giving assistance to the French. Afterwards, when the English determined to reduce Mahé, he did everything in his power to deter them from the attempt, and absolutely forbade them to attack it.

"All these particulars I have already written you an account of; and the Governor and Council here,* and Sir Eyre Coote, are well acquainted with. Hyder Ali was prepared to support the French; but for the English to begin hostilities against Mahé, not doubting but the French would be able to hold out until a reinforcement should arrive from Mauritius, when he would join them, and throw the blame of the breach on the English. Being disappointed in this expectation, he expressed himself in terms of the highest displeasure to the French Vackeel and to the French gentlemen who went to him from Pondicherry and from Mahé, saying, 'Your forces are not yet arrived. You have broken your engagement with me. Had I confided in you, and commenced hostilities, the whole

* [At Madras, whence the Nabob wrote. See p. 183.]

burden of the war would have been left on my shoulders.'

"It was at this time that he despatched a French gentleman, in a ship of his own, to the Mauritius, to require forces to be sent him from thence, engaging to pay their expenses. This intelligence is now confirmed by the relation of Captain Fenwick, who saw Hyder Ali's ship at the Mauritius. From this it is evident that the French forces will be received into Hyder Ali's dominions, and from thence, in concert with him, will invade the Carnatic."

Colonel Wilks traces the progress of Hyder Ali's hostility to the English from the time of their non-performance of their engagements to afford him their support and assistance, which he had twice solicited from them, when he was hard pressed in his wars with the Mahrattas. "From the period of the infraction by the English," Colonel Wilks says, "of the Treaty of 1769, by repeatedly declining to afford the stipulated succour, Hyder had anxiously wished for a suitable opportunity to retaliate the wrong.

"But in the year 1779, so far from having meditated the invasion of the succeeding year, his preparations were exclusively directed to

resist the formidable invasion, which the ministerial faction of Poona Mahrattas, after the conventional surrender of the English army at Worgaum, and the capture of their opponent Ragoba, had openly announced to the English, with whom they considered their differences adjusted. In a letter to Bombay, they expressed their earnest desire for an immediate accommodation, and informed that Government of the great preparations they were completing for marching in full force against Hyder Ali at the opening of the ensuing season; when the escape of Ragoba, from the custody of Sindia, on the 12th of June, and his reception by General Goddard at Surat, changed the whole plan of their policy, and induced the ministerial party at Poona to depute an embassy, without a moment's delay, to propose to Hyder an union with him for an offensive and defensive alliance against the English."

Colonel Wilks describes the arrival of the envoys "in the midst of the marriage festivities," on the occasion of a double alliance in Hyder's family at Seringapatam, and "all the leading features of a discussion, which terminated in an agreement, by which Hyder engaged to put forth his whole force to combine with the confederates,

for the expulsion of the English nation from India: Nizam Ali invading the Northern Circars; the Mahrattas of Berar, Malwa, and the more northern parts of Hindostan, attacking the territories of Bengal and Bahar; those of Poona and the south operating on the side of Bombay; while Hyder, accompanied by two thousand chosen Mahrattas, should direct his whole force against Madras. The detail of these negotiations was adjusted at Seringapatam. At their conclusion, the envoys were accompanied to Poona by the vakeels, or ambassadors, of Hyder, who commenced the most active preparations for the serious performance of his part of the compact." *

After reading this very particular account, given by Colonel Wilks, of the motives that led Hyder to form this confederacy, and the date when it was concluded, it is rather startling to be told, a few pages further on, that "it was the result of transactions between the Government of Madras and Nizam Ali," which transactions Colonel Wilks, so well acquainted with all the circumstances, knew had not then taken place; and, moreover, that the Nizam professed himself, on this account, the original adviser of the whole plan.

* Chap. xx., p. 207; chap. xxi., pp. 223, 233–238.

Colonel Wilks further follows the lead of Mr. Hastings, and tells us that "all these transactions were veiled by an unlawful mystery from the Governor-General and Council of Bengal, to whom the Treaty, concluded in April, 1779, was not communicated until the 8th of February, 1780, when it was disapproved, and the prompt restitution of Guntoor ordered to be made. By these, and other judicious and conciliatory measures, the Supreme Government succeeded in detaching from this powerful confederacy Nizam Ali Khan, who professed himself to have been its original adviser."

Colonel Wilks, rather inconsistently with the foregoing assertions, accounts for the neutrality observed by the Nizam in a manner which is also to be found in the Reports of the Committee.* "Intelligence had been recently received of a grant from the Mogul, obtained by Hyder, conferring on him the whole of the possessions then held by the Nizam himself."

Colonel Wilks mentions also that "the Nizam seduced the French corps under M. Lally into his service;" and adds, "The Government of Madras, in their letter to the Directors, complained of this as a direct violation of the Treaty of

* Sixth Report, p. 352, and elsewhere.

1768: *I cannot find the article which it violates.*"

From the description Colonel Wilks gives of the situation of the Guntoor, and the importance of the position occupied by the French force, (perpetually augmented by officers from the French islands,) it might be supposed that, in his estimation, the measure adopted to effect their removal, and at the same time for securing that country against Hyder's encroachments, was one of the most obvious policy; and, following the account he gives of the war, we shall find repeated mention of Mons. Lally and his corps being mainly instrumental to Hyder's early successes. Yet Colonel Wilks, overlooking the unanimity of the Board, and also the approbation of Bengal, resolves the whole conduct of the affair into the corruption of the President alone.

If we read with attention this portion of Colonel Wilks's History, it will be apparent that it has been revised and remodelled, in order to give a different impression from that originally intended, and that this has been done with scarcely sufficient care to conceal the purpose.

In the preface to his second volume, Colonel Wilks apologises for "a revision *not sufficiently careful of a certain portion of the contents*," and

he adds, that he has received a liberal "extension of aid in the researches connected with these volumes, and some of which he is restrained from making a particular acknowledgment."

Colonel Wilks then cites those to whom he was indebted, but whom he is not restrained from naming.

When we arrive at that portion of the History in which Sir Thomas Rumbold is on the scene, we find introduced, rather abruptly, an eulogy of Mr. Hastings, of whom (as this History is, professedly, of the South of India) not much mention had hitherto been made, couched in terms his best friends must deem rather injudicious. For "this digression" Colonel Wilks "apologises," on the plea of "recollections too strong and too recent to be easily suppressed."

The story told by all this plainly is, that between the first writing of this second volume and its publication, some intercourse took place between Mr. Hastings and the author, and the "person not named," to whom Colonel Wilks was indebted for aid in revising this portion of his History, was no other than Mr. Hastings himself.

With this clue it is not difficult to detect the

passages that have been altered, and to account for contradictory statements and confusion of dates.

Attention has already been asked to the necessary inference that, since Hyder had no claim, real or pretended, to the Guntoor Circar, the occupation of it by the English would only cause him displeasure by interfering with his designs upon the Carnatic; and as also it has been shown, in the foregoing pages, that the passage of the English troops through a small part of Hyder's territory had been guarded against by every possible precaution, and that Hyder was made acquainted with their object and destination, we may proceed to show in what manner the whole affair was converted into a plausible pretext to suit the purposes of the Committee, and still further wrested by Colonel Wilks to the injury of Sir Thomas Rumbold.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FIRST CAUSES OF HYDER'S HOSTILE PROJECTS, 1778–1780. THE MISREPRESENTATIONS OF COLONEL WILKS.

Another ground is now taken, and the point which Colonel Wilks endeavours to establish is, that Hyder's displeasure was expressed in consequence of the lease of the Guntoor to the Nabob of Arcot, which did not take place until some months afterwards.

It appears that the censurers of Sir Thomas Rumbold's conduct in the whole affair would have preferred that this important district had been left in the hands of Bazalet Jung, and a prey to Hyder; or given up, as in the event, by the Council of Bengal, to the Nizam; rather than given temporarily on lease to the Nabob of Arcot, who, whatever may have been the history of his debts, or the odium attached to his character, as the party interests of one or another prevailed in England, was the only political ally of the Company, with whom his fortunes were bound up, as he lived under the guns of Madras.

Although causing some interruption, it is necessary to dwell a little on this subject, and to show on what terms the Guntoor was sub-rented to the Nabob of Arcot. Where every single act of Sir Thomas Rumbold's administration has been made a subject of reproach, this has furnished the most plausible handle to his accusers, because it has been judged in a light falsely thrown upon it by subsequent events. That no suspicion of a corrupt influence can be attached to any of these acts is a point which the efforts of his accusers have established, since Sir Thomas Rumbold passed through an ordeal, to which it is hardly recorded that any man was ever subjected. But neither can this lease of the Guntoor be supposed to have had any effect detrimental to the general affairs of India, by causing additional displeasure to Hyder Ali, since his projects were formed, and in course of execution, several months before the first proposition was made of renting it to the Nabob.

The Guntoor was not definitively let for ten years. It was expressly stipulated that it "was not binding on the Company without their declared consent, and until their pleasure be signified to us." This was in answer to the application of the Nabob to rent the Guntoor for ten years,

made to the Board on the 19th of September, and reminding them, that on a former occasion the Directors had given their sanction for this, for reasons expressly assigned, and in distinction to the other Circars. On the 19th of October, the President and Council, with the proviso above mentioned, acquiesced in the Nabob's proposal, but with considerable restrictions. It was entirely guarded by the troops of the Company. The Nabob had not a soldier in the place; but he collected the revenue, and was responsible for the full amount of rent engaged to be paid to Bazalet Jung; which, in the low state of the Madras treasury, might, in case of unfavourable seasons, have proved embarrassing, had the revenue been collected by the Company. There was no person of sufficient responsibility to have been entrusted singly with so high a rent. The terms were very advantageous to the Company. The Nabob paid an increase of ten thousand pounds actual revenue annually, without expenses of collecting, and calculated from the receipts of the last four years. The manner of disposing of the Guntoor had been under consideration for several months. This appears from a letter written on the 19th of July to Captain Douglas, who commanded in the Circar,

wherein it is mentioned, "that it was not determined whether to collect the revenues by the Company's servants, or to let the country to renters." As in the case of the Jaghire lands, there were very particular stipulations for the protection of the inhabitants; and that the several amounts to be paid to the Company should not, in any shape, be blended with other accounts, but received immediately from the district. If the Nabob should "fail in one month's payment, the Company would appoint one of their servants to see the revenues were applied to the discharge of His Highness's engagements." *

When Lord Macartney enforced the assignment of the Carnatic for the support of the war, which occasioned the quarrel between him and Mr. Hastings, a great partizanship took place in England for the Nabob of Arcot: he was then spoken of as "our faithful and oppressed ally."

Among the random pages of Mr. Gleig, he speaks of this subject, and ushers in a series of mis-statements by the often-repeated story of the Guntoor and the tribute, which he follows, by affirming that he has "shown that, to the indignation excited in the mind of the Nizam, the

* Evidences, pp. 410–412.

Company were indebted for the league which joined Hyder to the list of their enemies, and would have brought upon them the force of the Deccan, had not the Supreme Council, &c. But the Madras Government, under Sir Thomas Rumbold," Mr. Gleig continues, "had been guilty of greater extravagances than this." . . . . . .Sir Thomas Rumbold is then put into the place of Lord Macartney, and a page is devoted to his ill-treatment of the Nabob of Arcot.

On the same subject we are told by Colonel Wilks, that " the Governor-General had strongly impressed upon Lord Macartney the necessity of assuming the direct management of what remained of that misgoverned country; and Mohammed Ali skilfully anticipated the event about the close of the year by most graciously assigning a country which, if assumed on undisguised grounds, might not have been so easily restored by the baneful influence so frequently deplored."

As far as this sentence is intelligible, the assertions contained in it are entirely false. These are specimens of the manner in which this History is told. With the facts concerning the Guntoor Circar, Colonel Wilks deals in the following manner :—

"The tardy arrangements of the Government

of Madras had not prepared the detachment until the month of August, when Hyder, after the completion of his conquest, had returned to Seringapatam, leaving his provincial command to Meer Sahib.* By a political inadvertence scarcely credible, Hyder's permission was not requested" (from Seringapatam!) "to pass through these foreign territories; the officer commanding the detachment was merely furnished with a letter to Hyder's manager, as he is termed,—a proceeding undignified as regarded the Governor, and insulting as it related to Hyder, subversive of all intelligible relations, and only showing that the Governor was aware of the necessity of some sort of permission. Colonel Harpur was allowed to proceed without molestation, &c., until, made aware of the opposition intended, he prudently determined on a retreat."

"A letter of remonstrance and explanation from the Governor to Hyder," (Colonel Wilks

* These particulars are not correct. Meer Sahib was not the name of Hyder's "manager." And the detachment had already proceeded to the Guntoor, in June, where it was unfortunately detained by the accidental failure of the precautions that had been taken for the supply of bullocks, &c.—Colonel Harpur's Letters. and Bazalet Jung's Letter to Colonel Harpur, dated June 26th, Evidences, pp. 392, 393.

says,) "was followed only by an announcement to Bazalet Jung of his fixed determination not to suffer an English force to pass to Adwani, nor the district of Guntoor to pass into the hands of his most inveterate enemy; for the Government had already unveiled the secret mover of the scene by subrenting the district to Mohammed Ali."

However such an "announcement," on the part of Hyder, to Bazalet Jung, "that he would not suffer an English force to pass to Adwani,' might have suited the occasion, it is not to be found in Hyder's letters; but Colonel Wilks has converted to his purpose a letter written by Hyder some months earlier, and has added to it expressions that could only suit a later period. This letter, the only one on the subject that appears, is addressed to Bazalet Jung's minister; and, by the date when it was communicated to Madras, as also by the context, it could only have been written immediately upon or before the completion of the Treaty; since Hyder desires that Bazalet Jung should "not enter into an alliance with the English, or let their troops be stationed with him. His Excellency might settle things in such a manner that he would keep

possession of the Circar of Guntoor. This might be done by allowing the Killidars of my country to rent the Circar from him; nobody would then dare to attack that country: His Excellency would find it more to his advantage to apply to me for succour than to another. It is in no shape prudent to call the English into that country. It is not in my power to consent to His Excellency's giving up the Circar to my old and bitter enemies, for it joins my country. Why should they be so much feared that their protection should be solicited? Experience has shown what treatment they have met with who have had connexion with that nation," &c.

As this letter appears in the Appendix to the Reports, Hyder speaks of his old and bitter *enemies*, the English. By changing the word *enemies* into the singular,* Colonel Wilks makes it apply to the Nabob of Arcot, and the lease of the Guntoor to him; although that was not proposed until the 4th of October, which was some months later than the date of this letter.† The same liberty of changing the word, as it stands in the Appendix, has been taken in the Report

* Wilks's South of India, chap. xxi., p. 237.

† Evidences, p. 107.

of the Committee;* and another instance may be mentioned, in which the expressions of a letter of Hyder have been converted into a meaning that should suit their purpose of applying them to Sir Thomas Rumbold.

The Governor-General had written to Hyder in January, 1780, desiring to receive from him an explanation of the reports circulated of his hostile intentions towards the Company, and declaring a desire to maintain the most amicable relations on their part.

Hyder's reply,† received July 17th, 1780, as it is given in the Appendix, makes no mention either of Mahè or the Guntoor; but specifies as the ground of his complaint, breaches of Treaty in former years, when the aid he sought had not been afforded him.‡ In the Report given by the Committee, the paragraph explaining what were the breaches of Treaty to which Hyder alluded is left out, and the letter is put forth to the public, giving the impression that Sir Thomas Rumbold was "the Governor" of whom Hyder complained.

It forms a paragraph in the Bill of Pains and

* Second Report, p. 285; *ibid.*, Appendix, No. 92

† Sixth Report, Appendix, No. 309.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 336.

Penalties that, "Whereas, as early as October, 1779, Sir Thomas Rumbold informed the Select Committee of Fort St. George that Hyder Ali's letters and messages had for some time been couched in hostile terms; that he had sent the Rev. Mr. Schwartz to the Court of Hyder, with private instructions to learn the real dispositions of that Prince; but that the issue of this secret negotiation *left Sir Thomas no reason to doubt but Hyder's intentions were hostile both to the Company and the Nabob.*" Another paragraph, closely following this, imputes to Sir Thomas Rumbold, on the word of Mr. Smith and Mr. Johnson, "the concealment of various letters containing important intelligence of the preparations making by Hyder Ali for the invasion of the Carnatic."

Mr. Smith being then in England, the Counsel for Sir Thomas Rumbold challenged him publicly in the House of Commons to give some support to these assertions, but no more was heard of Mr. Smith.* This story has been differently repeated, according to the fancy of successive writers. Sometimes it is Mr. Gray's information that had been suppressed. Colonel Wilks has made choice of Mr. Schwartz on whom to build the story.

* Mr. Hardinge's Defence of Sir Thomas Rumbold, p. 105.

Notwithstanding that, according to the paragraph just cited, the hostile intentions of Hyder, communicated by Mr. Schwartz, were fully declared in Council,* Colonel Wilks describes the whole as a very mysterious affair, "a point of secret history;" and his account has been followed implicitly—and probably in entire ignorance that the iniquitous insinuations of Colonel Wilks were unfounded, and even contradicted by evidence—in a Biography of the Rev. Missionary Schwartz, comparatively recent.

* Colonel Wilks's History, vol. ii., chap. xxi., pp. 243–256.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CAUSES OF HYDER ALI'S HOSTILE PROJECTS, 1778–1780, (CONTINUED). THE REV. MR. SCHWARTZ AND COLONEL WILKS.

The reasons for sending Mr. Schwartz privately were fully explained in a Minute given by the President on the 30th of October, where he says, "The letters and messages had lately been couched in such hostile terms that he could scarcely believe them to be the genuine expressions of Hyder. He thought it not impossible that Hyder's Vakeel at Madras might have been tempted to exceed, or pervert, the intentions of his master. The President therefore deemed it expedient to elude the jealous watchfulness of this man, and of the emissaries of the Nabob of Arcot, by sending privately a letter from himself to Hyder, desiring an explicit declaration of his real intentions with regard to the Company and the Carnatic."

The letter and message with which Mr. Schwartz was charged were to declare the most amicable desires on the part of the Company, and to urge the often-repeated request of a

meeting with Hyder, which might lead to a better understanding.

On the return of Mr. Schwartz, everything was freely communicated. He remained some time at Madras, and no secrecy was enjoined upon him. Colonel Wilks represents it as an "unhappy coincidence," that Mr. Schwartz should have arrived on this explanatory and peaceful mission a "few days after Hyder had received intelligence of Colonel Harpur's hostile attempt, as it was there considered, to pass without permission through the province of Kurpa." This, Colonel Wilks says, "was not likely to compose Hyder's resentment on other accounts; but he assured Mr. Schwartz, that if the English offered the hand of peace and friendship, he would not withdraw his, provided ——— ; but of these mysterious provisos nothing can now be ascertained."

This sentence Colonel Wilks gives as an extract from the correspondence of Mr. Schwartz, and immediately following he is represented to have said, "But the Nabob at Madras and others frustrated all hopes of peace;" it is also stated that Mr. Schwartz assigned as one reason for having accepted the commission, "that he, *at that time, really believed Sir Thomas Rumbold's intentions to have been upright and peaceable.*"

It is possible that Mr. Schwartz may have been in after times imposed upon, and led to make use of these expressions; but if the insinuations of Colonel Wilks had any meaning at all, it could only be that Hyder held out some conditional offer of peace, which the President refused and concealed.

The impossibility of this is as manifest as the supposition is absurd. Mr. Schwartz is described as interposing this mysterious blank, just where the condition would be explained; therefore Mr. Schwartz must have been himself a party to the concealment. But Mr. Schwartz adds, in continuation of his narrative, "At last he directed a letter to be wrote, had it read unto me, and said, 'What I have spoken unto you, that I have shortly mentioned in the letter; you will explain the whole more at length.'" According to Colonel Wilks, the important part was left out of the letter, and was only delivered to Mr. Schwartz by word of mouth.*

Colonel Wilks represents that in this letter Hyder enumerates every cause of complaint since the year 1769, especially mentioning the non-performance of the engagements the Presidency of Madras had contracted with him on two

* Second Report, Appendix, No. 37.

several occasions. As we have the letter, we have the means of knowing what the grounds of complaint were. "The Treaty alluded to," he says, "you will have in your possession, and you will please to peruse." Then follow various complaints, among which he mentions the "expedition sent to the French factory Mahé;" and also he says, "You wrote me word you were sending a body of your troops to Bazalet Jung, and you did so accordingly; and a skirmish took place between my troops and yours." Colonel Wilks has improved upon this last sentence by adding, "that an attempt was made to march troops through his territories." Another letter was written by Hyder in the month following, after the departure of Mr. Schwartz. It was as follows:—"I have received your letter, the contents of which I understand. Mr. Schwartz came here some time ago, and brought me a letter from you, to which I have wrote an answer containing all the particulars, and sent it to you by him. He will also acquaint you with several matters that I have charged him with." *

Colonel Wilks also quotes from this letter, but only the last sentence. He has taken care to suppress that in which Hyder says his former

* Second Report, p. 27.

letter "contained all the particulars." "Although," Colonel Wilks proceeds to say, "I had the pleasure of Mr. Schwartz's acquaintance many years afterwards, and heard him narrate many facts connected with the subject of the mission, he died before my attention was given to historical pursuits." He then adds, in a note, some vague and injurious insinuations, of which he affects to withhold the explanation from delicacy to the reputation of the dead!

"The Nabob Mahomed Ali, at Madras, and others, frustrated all hopes of peace," says Mr. Schwartz. "This," proceeds Colonel Wilks, "may afford a clue to conjecture which conversations between Mr. Schwartz and his most intimate friends would render sufficiently explicit, if it were permitted, to found on the recollections of such conversations after a long interval, the narrative of an historical fact of more than ordinary delicacy, involving the reputation of the dead."

Nothing has been too gross or too absurd to be advanced or received respecting Sir Thomas Rumbold, or it would seem needless to remark, that the mission of Mr. Gray, having so soon followed that of Mr. Schwartz, would naturally have led to the discovery of the secret between

Hyder and the Governor of Madras, which must have been so faithfully kept, at that time, by Mr. Schwartz.

After several pages of continued abuse, among which are some statements wholly false, Colonel Wilks furnishes an explanation of this inveteracy. "In their correspondence with Bengal, the Presidency of Madras stigmatized the Mahratta war as the source of Hyder's increased strength, and proposed a Mahratta peace as the best security against his designs. Instead of making provision for the defence of places, or the formation of a field force, they add to this puerile remark a description of their total helplessness."

"The letters received from Hyder," Colonel Wilks says, "spoke daggers to the most torpid apprehension; but the Government of Madras had not chosen to believe the hostility so frequently professed." It was probably better known to this unfaithful historian than to those who have borrowed their accounts from him, that Hyder's letters were duly transmitted to Bengal by the Government of Madras, and that they were accompanied by the declaration that they did believe in the hostility that Hyder professed, and an appeal to that Board for a supply to enable them to take those measures of

defence which the occasion called for, and which, without such aid, were wholly beyond their power; but that their representation of danger was disbelieved, and the supply refused.

It is sufficiently obvious, on a little examination, that it was a consciousness of this fact that led to the representations that may be traced originally to Colonel Wilks, of Sir Thomas Rumbold having either entertained himself, or encouraged in others, any delusion with regard to Hyder's projects, and the danger that threatened the Carnatic. The best comment on this universally favourite theme will be found in some extracts that are subjoined, taken from Sir Thomas Rumbold's letters during the last year, and the last week, of his stay at Madras. These will also supply an answer to the remarks made upon this part of the history by Lord Macaulay, as they appear in his review of the life of Mr. Hastings.

In a late edition, (p. 618,) we find this sentence: "Had Hastings been Governor of Madras, Hyder would either have been made a friend, or vigorously encountered as an enemy. Unhappily the authorities of the South provoked their powerful neighbour's hostility, without being prepared to repel it."

How far Mr. Hastings was, in general, successful in making the Indian princes his friends, is not the point to be considered here. But to meet either of these cases, Mr. Hastings had resources that did not belong to the subordinate Presidency. It is much to be lamented by those to whom this portion of the history possesses any merit, that Lord Macaulay did not refer to more authentic records. A stroke of that pen would have led the way to a more just appreciation of these occurrences. Lord Macaulay might have seen, especially in the first Report of the Committee of Secrecy, that the Governor of Madras was constant in his endeavour to cement an alliance with Hyder Ali, on the occasion of the overtures made by him, soliciting a personal interview, and afterwards repeatedly desiring that a person of rank in the service should reside at his court. When Hyder's threatening messages were received with regard to Mahé, it was proposed to the serious consideration of Sir Eyre Coote and the rest of the Council, whether they should conciliate Hyder by recalling the expedition. Subsequently, when thoroughly persuaded that his intentions were hostile, Sir Thomas Rumbold urged upon the Governor-General that the three Presidencies

should unite to check the power of Hyder Ali, which he described as the only source that seriously threatened the British possessions in India. As early as February, 1779, after a particular statement of the resources of the Presidency, a strong desire was expressed, that the Council of Bengal would give their advice and support towards placing the affairs of the Carnatic on a better footing with regard to the Nabob and the Rajah of Tanjore. The letter proceeds to say:—

"Some alarming intelligence received from Hyder, we lose not a moment in communicating to you.........We have, moreover, actually received accounts from the Nabob, of which we enclose a copy, advising that some bodies of Hyder's horse are arrived near the borders of the Carnatic. The plain and explicit declarations of the Vakeel, added to this intelligence, leaving little doubt respecting Hyder's intentions, we have written to Colonel Braithwaite, who commands the expedition to Mahé, to be particularly on his guard, attending to all the cautionary orders which we gave him in our original instructions.

"We cannot say how far we may yet be able to avert Hyder's threatened invasion of the Carnatic. It is certainly an alarming circum-

stance, when we consider our total inability to prevent the ravages of horse, and that our resources for war will instantly be cut off by their incursions. The conduct of Hyder is such as calls loudly for resentment; and could we entertain a reasonable hope of support from the Carnatic, and of funds sufficient to carry on an active war against him, we should certainly recommend the necessary preparations for it. ......So it is we labour under discouragements which will not permit us to act with vigour; and although it seems highly probable, from our situation, that we shall be obliged in the present war to sustain the principal efforts of our enemies, and that future success of the French on this coast may determine their success in every other part of India; yet it is certain that we are, in regard to resources, by no means in a condition to oppose any powerful attempts either of the French or of Hyder Ali. We shall, however, exert the utmost of our abilities, trusting that the difficulties of our situation will plead our excuse for any failures that may happen."*

To this letter, dated February 15th, 1779, no

* Minutes of Evidence, p. 470. See also letters of April 3rd, 1779; Bengal to Madras, August 17th.

answer was sent from Bengal until August 2nd, when a strongly enforced demand required that one-third of the effective force of the Presidency of Madras should be sent to reinforce General Goddard at Surat.*

In April 23rd of the same year, a letter was sent from Madras to Bengal, of which the following is an extract:—

"In our despatch of the 12th of March, we had the honour to enclose a copy of a letter we had received from Hyder Ali, relative to our expedition against Mahé; and in a former despatch we communicated to you a message delivered to us by his Vakeel on the same subject. We transmit the copy of another letter, written in the same style, and conveying the same hostile intentions......Also a copy of the answer we have written to him on the occasion......From what has passed, we can entertain but little doubt of Hyder's determination to break with the Company, and we are of opinion that no time should be lost in concerting the necessary measures for acting in that event with such a degree of vigour as may be likely to bring the war to a speedy conclusion. We think this may be effected

* Minutes of Evidence, p. 385.

without rendering the possessions of the Company too defenceless to oppose any probable attempt that may be made on them by the French. For this purpose, it appears to us expedient, that the three Presidencies should unite their force in proportion to the ability of each, and that a powerful attack should be made from the Malabar coast upon Hyder's two fortresses of Seringapatam and Bangalore, the reduction of which might probably put an end to the war. The force under General Goddard, with a proportion of the Bombay troops, and the heavy artillery and stores, might penetrate to Hyder's capital on the Malabar side, while a light army of our troops might proceed from this coast through the passes, and, if necessary, join them; or amuse Hyder in such a manner as to leave them at liberty to prosecute their operations against his principal forts.......We have received from Colonel Braithwaite the Articles of Capitulation for the surrender of Mahé, which we enclose.......

"Since writing the foregoing, we have intelligence from the Nabob that Hyder has made a conquest of the Cuddapah country, and is proceeding to subdue Canoul, and that he means to make a conquest of the territories of Bazalet

Jung, of which last measure the Vakeel of Bazalet Jung has, in the name of his master, expressed the strongest apprehensions; that he has also written threatening letters to the Zemindars of ——, who are tributaries to the Carnatic. In consequence of the late negotiations with Bazalet Jung, we have resolved to send immediately, for the protection of his country, three battalions of Sepoys, a company of Artillery, and six field-pieces. Hyder's proceedings in that quarter have added greatly to his power, and given him a much more easy access into the Carnatic than he had before. Considering all these circumstances, we are of opinion that immediate measures should be taken to compel Hyder to retreat back within his former limits, or, if necessary, to reduce him totally; for we have every reason to conclude, from the language that he holds, and from the nature of his proceedings, that he will shortly draw into hostilities, in which case it will be highly expedient that we should be prepared to act decisively; and we request that you will favour us with your sentiments and determination as soon as possible."

The following is an extract from the letter to

which we have referred, dated more than five months afterwards, namely, August 2nd, and received on August 30th, which was written from Bengal in reply to the Madras letter of February 15th:—"From the advices that have been lately received of the strength of the French at the Mauritius, we have reason to apprehend that an invasion is intended against the Government of Bombay. We therefore deem it of the utmost importance to provide for the safety of that Government, by reinforcing the army commanded by General Goddard, with a respectable addition of troops............The Commander-in-Chief has informed us, that one battalion of Europeans, three battalions of Sepoys, and fifty artillery, may be spared from your establishment, now the works of Pondicherry are demolished, without any risk or inconvenience to the service........Besides which, as you may daily expect a considerable addition of strength from Europe, we earnestly recommend it to you to issue immediate orders to the officer in command of the force at Mahé, to detach from thence as great a number of men as he can spare at this time, to join General Goddard without delay, and the remainder of his force when Mahé shall be dismantled. We also re-

quest that you will be pleased to complete the reinforcement recommended by the Commander-in-Chief to be sent to General Goddard, as soon as possible, from the most convenient stations of your army, allowing him to fix the place of rendezvous." *

To which letter the following reply was sent from Madras, dated October 30th, 1779:—"We had the honour to receive your letter of the 2nd of August, acquainting us with your reasons for thinking the French at the islands meditated an attack upon Bombay, and requesting in consequence that we would detach [troops from Mahé] in support of that Government. We shall always be led by inclination, as well as duty, to co-operate with you, to the utmost of our power, in any plan you may adopt for the security of the Company's possessions; but in the present case we hope there will be no necessity for such great succour to assist the gentlemen of Bombay, even should they be attacked: since we understand their force is very equal to their protection against any attempt that may be made by the French in their present state, and we are inclined to this opinion; because, having written to Bombay in the month of July,

* Evidences, p. 470.

to inform the President and Council of the intelligence we had received relative to the intentions of the French, they do not in their answer express the least apprehensions of the insufficiency of their force; and we suppose, further, that, had they any doubt upon this head, they would have detained the 'Asia' man-of-war, which was sent from England purposely to assist in their defence, and which they allowed to leave Bombay in the month of August, to join the Admiral at this place. But we conceive the French at the islands will not be in a condition to fit out an armament against Bombay, as far as we can learn from private intelligence: their nation is too much pressed, both in Europe and the West Indies, to spare any reinforcement for this country. General Goddard, in a letter dated August 15th, after mentioning that he is authorized to make a requisition of the force at Mahé, writes as follows:—'At present it is impossible for me to speak with any certainty of the effect of my negotiation with the Mahratta state, or whether I may have occasion for this reinforcement or not; but as I shall make it my care to have everything prepared for the transportation of the troops,' &c.........We have likewise a letter from our Commandant at Mahé,

enclosing a copy of one from the Governor of Bombay to him; in which he writes, 'General Goddard has been advised from Bengal, that the troops under your command at Mahé will be instructed to join his army, should he not succeed in his negotiations with the Mahrattas.'

"From these letters we should conceive that the object of the reinforcement was principally to support General Goddard's negotiations with the Mahrattas; and this is certainly a matter of so much importance, that we are disposed heartily to concur with you in promoting it. We have sent directions to Colonel Braithwaite, to obey any requisition that may be made for the troops at Mahé, which consist of, &c.

"As to any further reinforcement than the above, we are apprehensive our situation will not for the present admit of it. The non-arrival of the fleet leaves us at great uncertainty concerning the King's troops; and the season being now too late for the ships to come on the coast, we are at a loss where or when to expect them. We must observe, likewise, that the language Hyder Ali holds in his correspondence, and the great preparations he is making for war, manifest a strong inclination of breaking with the Company; and we believe he only waits for a

favourable conjuncture, which may soon happen, to declare himself openly. A war with Hyder, let the event be ever so successful on our part, would distress the Carnatic beyond measure, and prove a most expensive burden on the Company. We sincerely hope, therefore, that General Goddard may conclude a Treaty with the Mahrattas, and thereby free the Company from the necessity of engaging with the two most powerful states of India at the same time, which will probably be the case if he fail in his negotiation. Should we be at peace with the Mahrattas, Hyder will be afraid to disturb us; for, exclusive of our strength which he could then have no hope of resisting, the determined enmity which the Mahrattas bear him, would induce him rather to court our friendship, than to provoke us into hostilities; and this is precisely the state wherein only we can expect to preserve tranquillity in the Carnatic, which is so necessary at this juncture. We earnestly entreat you will be pleased to send, by the first proper conveyance, the five lacs of rupees which were promised us in August last, and which are much wanted to answer our extraordinary demands." *

Again, on the 10th of November, 1779, the

* Evidences, p. 473. Appendix, Sixth Report, No. 222.

Madras Presidency wrote to Calcutta as follows:—

"Since we had the honour of writing to you last, we have received letters from General Goddard, and from the gentlemen at Bombay, intimating a great probability that hostilities will take place with the Mahrattas; and advising that a requisition has been made to our Commandant at Mahé, to proceed as soon as possible with his force to Surat. In this state of affairs, on the other coast, we deem it expedient to mention to you again the critical situation we are in with respect to Hyder Ali, whose conduct of late has given us the strongest reason to believe that his intentions are hostile towards the Company and the Carnatic, and that he will seize the first favourable occasion of breaking with us. The cause of his resentment, as appears from his letters, is the attack made on the French at Mahé, who he says were under his protection; and our alliance with Bazalet Jung, which has given some check to his views of conquest in that quarter.

"Hyder has long been making warlike preparations, and his force now assembled at Seringapatam consists, as we are informed, of thirty thousand Sepoys and twenty thousand horse.

Should he enter the Carnatic, it will be totally out of our power to prevent the ravages of his horse; and of course we must suffer materially in our revenues, and in the means of supporting our expenses of every kind. In this case, the only dependence we shall have, will be on the efforts you will be able to make in our favour; and we could wish to know in time what assistance we may rely upon, that our measures may be taken accordingly." *

"If we should be compelled to act against Hyder, the best and only proper plan in our opinion is to send a considerable force by sea to Mangalore, to penetrate by that way to Seringapatam, and at once lay siege to the capital. This would be the most effectual way of distressing Hyder and putting an end to the war. The communication between Mangalore and Seringapatam might be kept open; and our troops supplied from the sea with provisions and other necessaries, with much less risk from Hyder's cavalry than by any other mode that could be adopted........We still flatter ourselves that the Mahrattas may be brought to terms of accommodation, since the proposals for a Treaty with them, which you transmitted for our informa-

* Evidences, p. 475.

tion, were so fair and equitable, (supposing no other requisitions have been made,) that we cannot be persuaded they will finally reject them." *

It was at this time that Mr. Smith, one of the Council, gave, during their deliberations, a Minute, of which great advantage has been taken by the traducers of Sir Thomas Rumbold. Mr. Smith's proposition was to this effect, that, "as the detachment now under orders to proceed to Bazalet Jung will be of the utmost importance, either for stopping Hyder's progress in that quarter, or acting offensively against him in case he should oblige us to do so, I propose that it be strengthened by at least two battalions, which may be drafted from the Northern Circars."........

Also, "I submit to the Committee the propriety of collecting a strong body of troops immediately to be cantoned at Conjeveram or Vellore, and held in readiness to act as occasion may require."

* Other conditions were imposed, to which the Mahrattas would not assent. It was required that they should pay a considerable sum towards defraying the expenses of the war. Thus the negotiation was not carried through.—Sixth Report, Appendix, No. 207; also Sixth Report, Appendix, 325.

It was found, on deliberation, that these propositions were more easy to make, than in the reduced condition of the Presidency to be carried into effect. Mr. Smith's Minute having been taken into consideration, "the Committee were of opinion,* that they had taken the only measures in their power by collecting their troops as much together as possible, to defend the country in case of invasion. Their future conduct must depend on what the gentlemen of Bengal may determine upon the present critical situation of affairs; and, until they know what part those

* In this opinion Mr. Smith undoubtedly concurred. This is declared by Mr. Smith himself, (who had not then commenced a systematic opposition to the other members of the Government,) in a subsequent Minute given on the 17th of July, 1780. In this Minute Mr. Smith says, referring to the former occasion, "The exhausted state of the treasury was a sufficient argument against incurring any additional expense, whilst the extremity of war could possibly be avoided; but in the present juncture of affairs, our wishes in this respect must give place to considerations of a more pressing and urgent nature. If the Nabob be unable to furnish the necessary supplies of cash, a sum of money should be raised on loan to answer the present exigency."......

This Minute of Mr. Smith is not to be seen in the Appendix to the Report. It is suppressed, for the obvious reason, that his former one could not have been paraded with so good a grace in the Letter of the Directors, and in the Bill of Pains and Penalties after the avowal last made.—See Evidences, p. 510.

gentlemen mean to take, they can pursue no active measures whatsoever, being entirely without the resources necessary for putting a considerable body of men into the field...... November 18th, 1779."

On the 20th of December, the expected answer from Bengal arrived. It was as follows :—

"GENTLEMEN,

"We have received your letter dated the 10th ultimo. We observe with concern the apprehensions which you so repeatedly and pointedly express in all your letters, of the supposed intentions of the Nabob Hyder Ali to invade the Carnatic. We cannot ourselves distinguish anything in the immediate conduct or correspondence of that chief, which indicates a design hostile to the English; and we should judge, from the uniform system of policy which he has manifested in all his actions for a course of years past, that he is not likely to forego the plans he was pursuing of conquests from the Mahrattas, and all the advantages held out to him by the diversion which our troops will probably occasion on the other side of India, in order to attack the Carnatic, without the greatest provocation; much less can we, without the strongest evi-

dence, impute to him such an apparent want of judgment as to defer the execution of his supposed intentions, until after we had reduced Pondicherry and Mahé, and driven the French out of India.......

"The heavy losses which we have lately sustained, and the unusual calls upon us for money, which are various, extensive, and indispensable, compel us to withhold that supply which it was our intention to have afforded you, for the completion of the fifteen lacs which you required from us; but you may still be assured of our exerting every effort to yield you assistance, should your necessities hereafter appear equally urgent with our own, and your means insufficient to answer them." *

[Up to this date, then, at any rate, that is, up to the end of 1779, it is plain that the responsibility of leaving the Madras Presidency unprepared against a war with Hyder, rests, not upon Sir Thomas Rumbold and his Council, but upon Mr. Hastings and the Council of Calcutta. Sir Thomas Rumbold and his coadjutors were vigilant and far-sighted, offered wise suggestions, and prayed for the help they so greatly needed. Mr. Hastings made light of their alarms, and

* Evidences, p. 487.

withheld the needed aid, whether in money or in men.]

We find the alarms of the Madras Government somewhat mitigated at the beginning of 1780; not, however, by any change in their views as to the disposition and designs of Hyder, but by the long-expected arrival of the fleet under Sir Edward Hughes. On the 18th of February, 1780, a letter was addressed to Bengal on the subject of the Treaty entered into by Hyder and the Mahrattas, of which some extracts are subjoined.

"GENTLEMEN,

"We have received your letter of the 30th of December. It would afford us very sensible satisfaction at this juncture, if we had sufficient cause to assent to the arguments you have brought against our suppositions relative to the designs of Hyder Ali; but the more we reflect upon his late conduct, the more we are satisfied that his intentions are really hostile, and that he only waits for a favourable occasion of acting from those intentions. We allow that his system of policy, until lately, has been to guard against the views of the Mahrattas, which have extended to the entire conquest of his country. ....It is owing to the constant wars carried on

between these two powers, that the Carnatic has not for several years been disturbed; but the scene becomes entirely changed by the part the English have taken in the divisions of the Mahratta empire. Hyder Ali has already so far profited by these divisions, as to reconquer several countries from the Mahrattas, and to make further acquisitions; which, as we understand, have been lately confirmed to him by an express Treaty, with the view of engaging his assistance in support of the ministerial party at Poona. Hyder, therefore, has now no immediate object to employ him on that side; and, being at full liberty to exercise his restless and ambitious spirit, it is natural to suppose he will exert it against those from whom he pretends to have received injuries, and whom he has openly ventured to threaten with his resentment. His enmity to us, and his attachment to the French, are equally strong. He was by no means pleased with our success against Pondicherry, and he loudly remonstrated by letter, and through his *vackeel*, against the expedition to Mahé, declaring that he would take vengeance for it on the Carnatic.

"Why these hostile intentions have not yet been put into execution, may be easily accounted for; the opportunity has not been favourable.

He expected some succours from the French Islands, which have not arrived; and as yet he is held in awe by the appearance of Sir Edward Hughes's fleet and the reinforcement of King's troops; but his disposition is not, we believe, in any shape altered, and the moment we meet with an unfavourable turn of fortune, or that he has reason to think our enemies are superior to us, that moment it is probable he will declare against us." *

No reply appears to this letter, but Mr. Hastings gave in Council the following Minute.

On the 17th of January, 1780:—"Governor-General. That a peace may have taken place between Hyder Ali and the Mahrattas I do not doubt; my own advices confirm it. But no alliance between them can be of long duration, as it is unnatural. I am convinced, from the whole tenor of Hyder Ali's conduct and disposition, that he will never molest us whilst we endeavour to preserve a good understanding with him. And I therefore object to this information being given to the Court of Directors in the general letter, as only tending to alarm them without sufficient cause for it." †

* Evidences, p. 475.

† Evidences, p. 492. Sixth Report, Appendix, No. 247.

[The correspondence from which we have now so largely quoted will serve as a luminous commentary on the words of Colonel Wilks, given above, (at p. 199,) and which have been substantially adopted by subsequent historians. Hyder's letters did, indeed, "speak daggers to the most torpid apprehension." Their meaning was well understood and keenly felt at Madras. Representations of the most urgent character, founded upon these letters, together with other evidence as to Hyder's designs, were again and again and again sent from Madras to Calcutta. But "the Government of" Bengal (not "of Madras) had not chosen to believe the hostility so frequently professed." By fact, the tables are thus turned on fiction,—fiction which, for three generations, has passed current for fact.]

CHAPTER XV.

THE DIFFICULTIES AND DISABILITIES IMPOSED UPON THE COUNCIL OF MADRAS BY THE POLICY OF MR. HASTINGS.

On the 14th of February, 1780, the Presidency of Madras wrote to Bengal on the subject of the reinforcement they had been required by the Governor General to send to General Goddard. This letter proves that the forces of the Presidency had been of necessity a good deal dispersed in order to guard the possessions of the Company.

"Gentlemen,

"We yesterday received a letter from Colonel Braithwaite, in consequence of our orders to him for evacuating Mahé, and sending the detachment to Surat........You will perceive the disagreeable situation of affairs at Tellicherry, and the reasons which induced Colonel Braithwaite to remain there with his whole detachment to act in defence of that settlement.........The part taken by Hyder Ali in fomenting these disturb-

ances, and marching a large body of his troops to take possession of the ruins of Mahé, on account of its proximity to Tellicherry, shows no very favourable disposition towards us; and might well warrant the conjecture formed by Colonel Braithwaite, that he would probably assist the Nairs in their attempt upon that factory........We made it a part of our instructions to Colonel Braithwaite to have no interference, directly or indirectly, with any powers or chiefs, beyond the limits of his authority; and he appears to have so strictly conformed to our orders in this respect, that we do not believe he has had the smallest share in any of the transactions which may have given rise to the present troubles........When we heard of these disturbances, and the consequent detention of our troops at Tellicherry, we came to the resolution of sending, at all events, immediately a respectable reinforcement from hence to join General Goddard's army at Surat, and ordered, &c........This exertion, we assure you, is the utmost we are capable of making in the critical situation of our affairs with Hyder; and it is such, that should a powerful invasion take place, we must act entirely upon the defensive, and look chiefly to the care of our garrisons. Nevertheless, in the

present state of affairs on the other side of India we conceive it to be our duty to sacrifice much to promote the object of peace; and we trust that the considerable reinforcement we are sending to General Goddard may enable him to accomplish it upon safe and honourable terms."*

In the mean time, every precautionary measure that, with their total want of resources, lay within their power, was adopted by the Presidency.

The Company's troops that had been distributed in the Tanjore country were recalled, and new regiments formed to take their place, according to the proposal in a Minute given by Sir Thomas Rumbold, on the 4th of February, 1780, as follows:—

"The critical situation of the Company's affairs at present having obliged this Government to send a very considerable force to General Goddard at Surat, and also to station a body of troops to the northward, for the protection of the Circars against any attempts from either the Nizam or Hyder in that quarter, it appears absolutely necessary that the remaining force on the coast should be drawn as much together as

* Evidences, p. 478.

possible; and for that purpose I would recommend to the Committee the raising a body of Sibbendy Sepoys in such districts where it may be found necessary, and particularly at Tanjore and Masulipatam. There are now five battalions of Sepoys in the Tanjore country; and, it appears by the last returns, they are very much dispersed in securing collections, which not only makes it difficult on any emergency to collect them together, but must occasion a relaxation of discipline,....and render them unfit for field service, ...and probably not equal to those trained in the service of Hyder........The Rajah is desirous that the number raised should consist of two thousand men. I would not recommend the appointing many officers to them, but sufficient to answer the intent of keeping up some sort of discipline and regularity, to attend to the mustering them, the inspection of their arms, &c., that may give them the appearance of regular troops, and render them of service in defence of the country on any troubles, or in case of an invasion........

"Ordered,—That as soon as a sufficient number of Sepoys be raised to answer the immediate calls of the Rajah, Captain Davis's and Captain Mackenzie's battalions do march to the

cantonments at Pondicherry, and that the garrison at Tanjore do consist only of three battalions of Sepoys." *........

[The course of circumstances by which the Madras Council had, sorely against their will, been driven to weaken their own resources, in order to help General Goddard and the Bombay Presidency, will be more fully shown by the following letters and extracts.]

On the 3rd of January a letter had been addressed to the Governor of Bombay, as follows:—
"A few days ago we received a letter from Colonel Braithwaite, acquainting us with the disturbances created in the neighbourhood of Tellicherry by the Nairs,....and [that] the dangerous though concealed part taken by Hyder to foment these troubles, had induced him to keep the Europeans intended for General Goddard's army, and to act with his whole force in defence of Tellicherry. By Colonel Braithwaite's letter it appears that by affording protection to people who were obnoxious, offence had been given to Hyder Ali and the Nairs, and that this offence, whether real or pretended, had probably occasioned the present troubles. This, however, will form more properly an object for your inquiry; and we have

* Evidences, p. 483.

no doubt you will take effectual measures for putting an end to the disputes, and enabling Colonel Braithwaite to forward the Europeans, if no material change of circumstances has happened, and return to the coast with the Madras Sepoys now at Tellicherry. To make up for the disappointment which might be felt by the detention of our troops at Tellicherry, we have resolved immediately to reinforce General Goddard with, &c........Viewing the present situation of affairs, we cannot but be extremely anxious for a peace with the Mahrattas; and, though we have thought it necessary to send such a large force to the other side of India, it is chiefly in the hope that General Goddard will be enabled by such means to effectuate a safe and honourable peace, without which we see no end to the danger and embarrassment that threaten us, from a combination of the Mahrattas, Hyder Ali, and the Nizam; the two former of whom have actually concluded an offensive Treaty against us, and the latter is ready to join upon the first signal." *

On the 4th of February another letter was addressed to the Council of Bombay, as follows:—

* Evidences, p. 480.

"GENTLEMEN,

"WE have received your letter of the 2nd of January........You express your wishes that at this time we may be full and unreserved in our political correspondence........Upon this principle we deem it expedient to give it as our opinion that a war at this time may unite against us all the principal powers of India; and when it is considered that we have an actual war to sustain with the greatest powers of Europe, we think a peace with the Mahrattas is safer and more desirable upon almost any terms........and setting aside the evils which present themselves from war at this juncture, as we do not see from whence are to be derived resources sufficient to manage undertakings of such magnitude." *

The following letter had been addressed from Madras to Brigadier-General Goddard at Surat, dated October 30th, 1779.

"SIR,

"WE have sent orders to Colonel Braithwaite, who commands our troops at Mahé, to obey any requisition you may find it necessary to make for the assistance of those troops; but we sin-

* Evidences, p. 484.

cerely hope the necessity will be avoided by the conclusion of an honourable Treaty with the Mahrattas. We think it proper to acquaint you, that from the conduct of Hyder Ali, we have the greatest reason to suppose his intentions are hostile to the Company, and that he means to take the first favourable occasion of breaking with them. Thus circumstanced, a peace with the Mahratta state is the most desirable thing that can happen, as it will enable us effectually to keep Hyder in awe, and to employ our arms at the same time in such a manner as the great national war in which we are engaged may require." *

This letter from Sir Thomas Rumbold and his Council was followed up on January 6th, 1780, by the following, also addressed to General Goddard :—

"SIR,

"Colonel Braithwaite having advised us that the state of affairs at Tellicherry had obliged him to detain his detachment for the defence of that settlement, we have resolved to send you a respectable force immediately from hence, consisting of, &c. . . . . . .

* Evidences, p. 473.

"We hope this reinforcement will enable you to make a speedy, honourable, and lasting peace with the Mahrattas; for the situation of affairs at home, by the junction of the French and the Spaniards, and abroad by the union of the Mahrattas, Hyder, and the Nizam against us, render such an accommodation most desirable. ....As we have considerably weakened our establishment by sending so many of our best troops to such a distance from us, we request, the moment an accommodation is effected with the Mahrattas, you will take measures for returning our troops to the coast with all possible expedition." *

Meantime, to Colonel Braithwaite, commanding at Tellicherry, a letter had been sent on December 30th, 1779, as follows:—

"We are very sensible of the difficulties you have had to encounter......We are sorry, at a time when we have so many calls for our troops, that you should have been drawn by the apparent imprudence of the gentlemen of Tellicherry into measures we so much wished to avoid.......We are still anxious to reinforce General Goddard with your Europeans; and, if

* Evidences, p. 505.

circumstances have not materially changed since the date of your last letter, we would have you embrace the first opportunity of sending them to Surat or Bombay. As we have so much confidence in your care and circumspection, we desire you to continue in the command of Tellicherry with the Madras Sepoys until you shall think the present danger removed. . . . . We desire you will, in our name, strongly recommend it to the Chief and Council to establish tranquillity by every means in their power; and, if any just cause of offence have been given to the Nairs, or to Hyder Ali, we wish it were instantly removed; for, in the present situation of affairs, it is highly necessary that we should industriously avoid all occasions of adding to our enemies." *

And, that nothing that could be done might be left undone in the way of preparation against Hyder Ali and his designs, instructions were sent as follows to Mr. Cotsford and the Council at Masulipatam, of which he was Chief :—

"GENTLEMEN,

"As we are uncertain, in the present state

* Evidences, p. 476.

of affairs, what movements may be made by the Nizam, or by Hyder Ali to the northward, we think it expedient to be prepared against any attempts that may be formed by them to our prejudice; and, though we hope and believe our possessions will not be disturbed, we have given orders to Lieutenant-Colonel Baillie to be on his guard, and to act in defence of the Circars, should there be the least insult offered to any of them. We have also directed him to apply to you, if he finds it expedient, for a reinforcement from Ellore; and we desire in case of such an application that you will assist him with as many of the Sepoys from that garrison as can possibly be spared." *

The exact situation of affairs at Madras is well shown in the following summary of reasons given to Sir Eyre Coote for not complying with his desire, that a part of Lord M'Cleod's regiment should be sent to him.

"First. Because we have sent from this coast to join General Goddard at Surat. Secondly. Because we have no doubt that the intentions of Hyder Ali are hostile, and that nothing will induce him so soon to declare himself openly

* Evidences, p. 480.

against us as an appearance of weakness in our force upon this coast; being satisfied that he is kept in awe at present merely by the strength which we derive from Sir Edward Hughes's fleet and the King's troops. Thirdly. If the French or Spaniards have any designs upon our possessions in India, the attempt will, in all probability, be made on the coast, or on the Malabar side; in either of which cases the strength of this Presidency will be called forth, and particularly if Hyder should join to favour such an attempt.

"These reasons, we hope, will prove satisfactory to you, Sir; and induce you to acquiesce in the troops remaining together until the situation of affairs shall be more favourable, or until our troops be returned from the service on the other side of India." *

The effect of detaching Colonel Braithwaite, as required by Mr. Hastings, to the aid of General Goddard, will be seen from a Minute adopted at a Select Committee, April 1st, 1780, the day when Sir Thomas Rumbold delivered his parting Address to the Board, on leaving Madras for Europe.

"As by reason of the large detachment sent to Surat, and the detention of our troops at

* Evidences, p. 485.

Tellicherry, our military establishment is too much weakened to admit of our sending any body of men into the field; and as the Nabob has applied for a force on account of the refractory polygars; Mr. Church to send to Anjengo the Madras Sepoys now at Tellicherry." *

On February 25th, 1780, the following instructions were sent by the Council of Madras:—

"To Mr. Morgan Williams, resident at Ganzam.†

"In order that Captain Bruce's battalion may be kept together as much as possible...... we desire that the three companies of Sibbendy may be put under the centre, and that the regular Sepoys be kept together in cantonment, and not employed but in cases of emergency."...

Also to Lieutenant Douglas, commander in Guntoor, instructions were sent as follows:—

"As we are uncertain, in the present unsettled state of affairs, what movements may be made by the Nizam or Hyder Ali to the northward, we desire, in case Colonel Baillie should make any requisition for your Sepoys, that you will join his detachment with the whole, or such part as may not absolutely be wanted for the service of the revenue." ‡

* Evidences, p. 493. † *Ibid.* ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 481.

[From these instructions, and from the whole tenor of the correspondence, as given in this chapter and the preceding, it is abundantly evident that, by the policy and by the requirements of Mr. Hastings, as well as by his refusal to send help, either in men or money, it had been put beyond the power of the Council of Madras to make any effectual preparations against Hyder Ali's projects, although they were perfectly aware of all the dangers surrounding their position.]

CHAPTER XVI.

SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD'S DEPARTURE FROM MADRAS. HIS REPRESENTATIONS AS TO THE STATE OF AFFAIRS.

It was in his parting address to the Board, (with whom the subject had been so constantly under consideration, that no information or "authoritative" declaration could be needed by them from him,) that those words were used by Sir Thomas Rumbold, which have found so many echoes.

The address was as follows :—

"The very bad state of health I have laboured under obliging me to quit this Government and return to Europe, I deem it necessary to submit some points to the consideration of the Select Committee, &c......It affords me particular satisfaction that the whole of the Carnatic, and the Company's northern possessions, are at present undisturbed and in perfect tranquillity. However well inclined Hyder Ali may be to give disturbance, neither he nor the Nizam have as yet thought proper to put any of their threats into execution; and, from the arrival of the fleet with the King's troops, I think there is the

greatest prospect that this part of India will remain quiet, especially if the Government cautiously avoid taking any measures that may be likely to bring on troubles.......

"It is greatly to be wished the expenses, both civil and military, could be reduced.......As we have already experienced the benefit of establishing an office under Mr. Procter for auditing all accounts, I am in hopes, by degrees, all superfluous charges will be struck off, and the expenses be greatly reduced.......Our resources are in some measure diminished by an almost total stop to the vend of imports; which, from the troubles in different parts of India, and the war with France and Spain, are in no demand. This circumstance, with the amount formerly allowed by the Company to be drawn annually on Europe, formed a considerable part of the supplies.

"Mr. Whitehill's length of service to the Company cannot fail to have given him a thorough knowledge of every branch of their affairs; and the Directors having selected him to bring out those very important dispatches for the new arrangement of the Government, in which he was to have so considerable a share, was a very convincing proof of their approbation of his conduct......It affords me particular satis-

faction to know that I leave at the head of the army a gentleman who has on different occasions rendered such essential services to the Company and the nation......I most sincerely hope nothing will induce Sir Hector Munro to quit his command during the present unsettled state of India. I cannot conclude this Minute without returning my thanks to the Select Committee and the Board for the support I have received,......and without recommending to them that unanimity which is always necessary for conducting the Company's affairs." *......

The date of this Address, as we have seen, (p. 233,) was April 1st, 1780. To the Directors, Sir Thomas Rumbold could not say that Hyder was already at the gates of Madras; but, in his official letters to them, he had laid every circumstance before them, and explained what grounds there were to hope that the immediate danger was past; and he had pointed out the only measure which he considered could give a prospect of security for the future.

The date of the letter of which the following is an extract, is January 21st, 1780:—

"You have been advised of the arrival of the squadron.......At present everything is quiet in

* Evidenecs, p. 500.

the Carnatic, and nothing very material has occurred since my last dispatch to you. Hyder has hitherto contented himself with extending his conquests to the northward, and has not yet invaded the Nabob's possessions.......From the advance of the season without any movement having been made by Hyder towards the Carnatic, I am induced to think we shall remain in peace, especially as the very seasonable arrival of the fleet with the troops will have a powerful effect in preventing any design of an invasion, if such have been seriously intended. By the last accounts from General Goddard, he had not been able to bring about a Treaty with the Mahrattas on the terms he contended for; and viewing the situation of your affairs in that quarter, and how evidently necessary it appeared that General Goddard should be rendered as formidable as possible, either to give him sufficient weight to bring about peace, or to continue the war if possible to advantage, your Select Committee have determined, notwithstanding their apprehensions of the Nizam and Hyder, to send a very considerable reinforcement to join General Goddard at Surat. A day or two after your Select Committee came to the resolution of reinforcing General Goddard, the intelligence arrived

that Sir Edward Hughes with the fleet might be expected in the course of a fortnight; which relieved us in some measure from the apprehensions entertained in consequence of our parting with so large a force.......It is with concern I acquaint you that I shall be under the necessity of returning to Europe in the 'General Barker.' Such has been my state of health, that it has been matter of surprise my constitution has held out against the repeated severe attacks I have laboured under. I am more particular in mentioning my situation, because, whilst I have the honour of receiving your approbation of my conduct, I quit the management of your concerns with great reluctance and regret; but were I to attempt remaining, and escape with life through the approaching hot season, I could not do justice to your affairs, from my inability to give the necessary application to them." *

On the 7th of February, the following communication was forwarded by the same ship:—

"I have the honour to forward to you enclosed a duplicate of my letter of the 21st. It is with infinite pleasure I inform you, that from the late conduct of Hyder Ali in releasing some gentlemen that were detained by his officers on the

* Evidences, p. 211.

Malabar coast, and from his remaining at Seringapatam, and withdrawing some troops he had to the northward, I can speak with confidence that there is no likelihood at present of any troubles on this side of India, and I flatter myself, that during the course of the season some effectual measures will be taken to bring about a peace with the Mahrattas." *

On the 12th, Sir Thomas Rumbold says:—

"As the season for invasion is now far advanced, we flatter ourselves we shall escape troubles for the present year at least. The arrival of the fleet, and the reinforcement of troops, will add much to our security; and we hope to give it permanence in the event of an accommodation with the Mahrattas." †

The last words of the last letter addressed by Sir Thomas to the Directors, under date April 3rd, 1780, three days before he sailed for England, were the following:—

"If the country powers were capable of taking all the advantage which a combination might give them against us, we should severely feel the weight of their united operations; but, fortunately for the Company, their jealousy of each other is too strong to admit of any sincere and

* Evidences, p. 491. † *Ibid.*, p. 490.

permanent agreement; and we think even now, notwithstanding the provocation which the Mahrattas have received by our measures in support of Ragonaut Row, *were we to grant them any reasonable terms of accommodation, they would instantly turn their arms against Hyder, and leave us once more to the enjoyment of that tranquillity which we experienced from their former contests with him*." *

If, on the least favourable construction that can be put upon these last expressions, it should be considered that Sir Thomas Rumbold, then on the eve of departure, augured too favourably from the grounds he alleged, it is impossible, on a review of the precautions taken, and of the repeated letters of warning, in which the Board concurred, that he should not be absolved of that far more weighty imputation of having lulled others into a false security, and thereby induced that neglect and incredulity when the invasion took place, which are so much expatiated upon.

In the imputations of apathy and negligence against the Madras Government, after the departure of Sir Thomas, which are always made to reflect back upon Sir Thomas himself, there was originally great exaggeration. An

* Evidences, pp. 504–5.

examination of the Appendices to the Reports of the Committee shows that they were derived entirely from one-sided and interested statements. Some part of the evidence on this head will be given in the Supplementary Chapter.

It has been made a subject of reproach, and with more plausibility, that when Sir Thomas Rumbold returned to Europe, "he deserted his post." According to the conduct we have seen pursued by those placed under circumstances somewhat similar, what had taken place between Mr. Hastings and him might fairly have been alleged as a reason for quitting Madras; but this motive was not alleged. There is abundant testimony in private correspondence, which might be produced, to show that the return to the climate of India, after an absence of some years, took such effect immediately on the President's health, as threatened serious and even fatal consequences; but there was evidence, fully confirmatory of this statement, given publicly by Colonel Capper, who was examined with regard to the state of the army at Madras, at the bar of the House of Commons. This examination was of great length, and interesting on many points.* Colonel Capper had

* Evidences, pp. 513–518.

been twenty-one years in the service of the Company, and had last served as Commissary General. The account given by him with regard to the disposition of the troops, and supplies of stores, &c., in the garrisons, contrasts remarkably with the impressions that had been generally received of the defenceless state of the Carnatic.

Colonel Capper was asked, "Do you know the reason of Sir Thomas Rumbold's quitting the Government in 1780?" He replied, "Mr. Paisley, the first physician at Madras, who is a very intimate friend of mine, told me that he thought it hardly possible for Sir Thomas Rumbold to survive the next land winds, which would blow for the next three or four ensuing months. He had such frequent returns of illness, the physician told me further, that if he would not refrain from the fatigues of public business, it would probably be fatal to him."

Colonel Capper was questioned much "whether in the beginning of April, 1780, the report of Hyder's invasion was looked upon as so likely to happen, as to make it necessary to bring a body of troops immediately into the field?"

Answer. "In that month I believe the Governor would not send an army into the field on

common report, because it is a very unfavourable season for the enemy to invade the Carnatic, with a body of horse especially, there being very little water in the rivers or tanks, and also very little grass for feed."

"Do you, from your knowledge, think any of the villages on the frontiers of the Carnatic would have been proper to have cantoned our troops in, previous to the invasion of Hyder Ali?"

Answer. "It would have answered no purpose to have carried them to the frontiers, as there were several passes through which the enemy could have come into the Carnatic, and surrounded us; and, as we had no cavalry, might have prevented any supplies being sent to us."

"What situation is the most centrical for assembling an army to cover the different garrisons?"

Answer. "I believe near Conjeveram and Wandewash."

"From your knowledge of the Nabob of Arcot, do you think that he was not apprehensive of such an invasion?"

Answer. "The report varied at the Durbar in the end of May and beginning of June, 1780, and then I heard the Nabob say that Hyder had sent a body of pioneers to clear the passes; and that

was the first time he seemed to think it certain that the Carnatic would be invaded."

"Do you think that in April, 1780, the army was in a proper situation to have taken the field against the enemy?"

Answer. "They were both in a proper state and situation, if bullocks and other common preparations had been provided."

Colonel Capper described the principal garrisons as amply supplied with stores, and "Arcot a perfect magazine of stores and ammunition." *

* Evidences, pp. 49–54. It may be seen, page 161, of the Minutes of Evidence, that the Counsel for the prosecution abandoned these two paragraphs of the Bill—127 and 128—which charged Sir Thomas Rumbold with "culpable negligence in not preparing for the defence of the Carnatic," &c.; and also "the concealment imputed to him by Messrs. Smith and Johnson, members of the Select Committee of Fort St. George, of letters containing important intelligence of the preparations making by Hyder for an invasion of the Carnatic."

After Major Geils's evidence,—which was given very early, as he was under orders to return to India,—the first charge was withdrawn.

[Unfortunately, historians, writing under an unfriendly bias and inspiration against Sir Thomas Rumbold, and following each other's lead, instead of resorting to the original sources of evidence and information, have retained and handed on charges which the personal enemies and official antagonists and prosecutors of Sir Thomas Rumbold, in his lifetime, were compelled to abandon.]

Very particular testimony was also given by Major Geils, an artillery officer and field engineer. He stated, that "the fortifications of Madras were effected during the government of Sir Thomas Rumbold; that the artillery were complete with stores and carriages, and in high discipline;" that "a body of Lascars was raised, and attached to the artillery, which were found particularly useful in the field, as well as new corps trained, that the regular Sepoys might strengthen the army."

Major Geils gave it as his decided opinion that, "With any force they had to oppose Hyder Ali, they could not have prevented him from making himself master of the open country. He looked upon Madras, Velour, Trichinopoli, and Tanjore, as their principal garrisons. None of these had fallen, but with respect to the inferior garrisons, they ought to have been erased. I think," Major Geils repeated, "Hyder Ali might have entered the Carnatic, in spite of any disposition we could have made. Had Hyder entered by the northern pass, there were no other troops for the protection of the Northern Circars than Colonel Bailly's division."

In the small part of the evidence of these officers that has been cited, they are found to

agree in the opinion expressed by Sir Thomas Rumbold, in his letters to the Council of Bengal, that they could not protect the country from the ravages of Hyder, or guard all the passes; and justify the proposition, which he twice urged upon their consideration, that abandoning other projects and views, excepting those of necessary defence against the national enemy, "the three Presidencies should unite to check his power," and put an end to the war which was certainly impending.

Although in the course of what has been written, some passages from Mr. Hardinge's Defence of Sir Thomas Rumbold have been occasionally introduced, the compiler of these documents was not in possession of that Defence until the principal part of what is here set forth had been worked out from other sources. The Defence consists of three parts, and is to be met with in the British Museum; the first two parts are complete, the third part is in an abbreviated form.

It has been a question whether this Defence, admirable in power, as well as for its eloquence and wit, should be reprinted and circulated, in the hope of calling attention to a subject where

the truth has been too long suffered to remain disguised; but this plan was not carried out, for the reason that the Defence enters into great detail; and to be thoroughly understood requires some acquaintance with the very numerous charges of the Bill, and also with the speeches of the Counsel for the accusation, to whom a great part of it is addressed. This objection does not apply in the same degree to the concluding part, which is more general, and a summary of the rest.

A great portion of this is subjoined.

CHAPTER XVII.

EXTRACT FROM THE CONCLUDING CHAPTER OF MR. HARDINGE'S DEFENCE OF SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD.

AFTER a recapitulation of what took place on the subject of the Guntoor Circar in the year 1775, Mr. Hardinge continues:—

"I recur to the duty of Sir Thomas Rumbold and his Council in 1778, and I ask, if under the sanction of the letters from Bengal, especially the latest, compared with the subsequent events, and the Nizam's violation of his promise, they were not authorized at one immediate stroke, (waiting for no further correspondence, either with Bengal or the Nizam,) to repossess the Guntoor. Every single step which the culprit before us pursued relative to the Guntoor was not only vindicated, but authorized, by the Governor General, Mr. Hastings. Over some parts of his conduct by Sir Thomas Rumbold, I would throw a veil, if I could; but here I affirm that I can fight in support of the *guilt* imputed by this Bill under the shield of *his*

genius and spirit. No doubt of the Company's right either to correspond or treat with Bazalet Jung had been suggested by the Council of Madras; and the only doubt which they had insinuated, was upon the single question of acquiring the Guntoor by force. But at Bengal, the right of treating with Bazalet, in a pacific form, or sword in hand, (as the Board of Madras might think most eligible,) is taken for granted; and the letter authorises an immediate force to be levied, for the purpose of a march to the borders of Guntoor. If this requisition should fail, say the Council of Bengal, and he should refuse instant obedience to it, act upon the other alternative yourselves, and after possession thus obtained, treaty for the cession, that is, for the terms of retaining the Circar, already taken into our hand, (by an act of justice to ourselves,) is to be formed with Bazalet's brother the Nizam."

"What is the conduct of Sir Thomas Rumbold and his Council? They had read the latest instructions from Bengal; they had read and seen how baffled those instructions had long been, partly by the debates of men who should have acted, and partly by the Nizam's breach of good faith; yet they could not but see, that Bengal had also been inactive, and had not pressed the

execution of his own plan, or censured the disregard shown to it by the inferior Council. In delicacy, therefore, to the superior Board, they pause; and before they direct those acts of hostility against the Nizam, which the Government of Bengal had even authorized, they write a letter to him; in the genuine spirit of the instructions before them. They tell him 'that if he will not consent, they will take effectual means with Bazalet Jung. They claim the Port of Mootapillee, at all events; but unless the enemy shall be dispossessed, they require the cession of not Mootapillee alone, but the whole Circar.' At the time of writing, an order was issued for intercepting the first European reinforcements that should enter the Guntoor at Mootapillee. The letter was never answered by the Nizam."

"At a later period, the war preceding the capture of Pondicherry took place. An abler and more spirited enterprise was never planned; an able and spirited enterprise was never better executed. The policy of it was, to rid us of the European competition first, and then direct our united force against the country powers, whom the invader had seduced or encouraged in their disaffection. For the support, however, of this

measure, the Northern Circars were in a manner evacuated, and almost at the mercy of Bazalet's friends in the Guntoor. . . . . . .After Pondicherry was captured, no European enemy remained, except the garrison of Mahé, and Lally's force in the Guntoor. It could scarce be imagined that a mad perseverance of the Government at Bengal in the war against the Mahrattas, with whom the Nizam and Hyder Ali were leagued, would counteract the benefit of such critical services. After this capture, Sir Thomas Rumbold again wrote, with no better success, to the Nizam. He desired an answer to the first letter, but no answer came. In the mean time, Bazalet Jung, unsolicited, made an offer of the Guntoor upon terms."

"Upon the 22nd of December they apprise the Government at Bengal of the offer and of their Treaty, in the express terms of it. They state the arrangement as made with Bazalet alone, and the rent stipulated as a compensation to him. The very name of the Nizam is put aside, and laid upon the shelf, unless for the purpose of stating that he has neglected his duty, violated his word, and sent another shuffling letter, since Bazalet's offer had been accepted. They state the right of treating with Bazalet, or proceeding by force

against him, as authorized by the result of the correspondence between the Governments in 1775, and by the events which followed it."

"What is the conduct of the Government of Bengal, thus informed? They approve directly, and without reserve, the acceptance of this overture, and ratify the Articles of Treaty enclosed, except in two or three particulars, which they correct. They return it, so corrected, and in express terms authorize the Council of Madras to conclude this Treaty with Bazalet Jung. They speak of the 'alliance proposed as affecting *him*.' 'We leave it,' says the letter, 'to *you* to negotiate, and finally conclude with *him*.' Upon the Nizam, not a syllable is to be found. Could that Government have acted otherwise, at this later period of their politics, addressed evidently to the same object, and affected by the same principles? Could they have said, 'You should first have conciliated the Nizam?' Could they have stated his consent as the express or implied preliminary to the correspondence and agreement with his brother? Their own words upon record must have confuted them, and exposed the duplicity of their politics. Yet, in the year 1780, they misrepresent, or at least forget, the tenour of the letters written by

themselves in 1775, and preserved upon the Company's records."

"'We took it for granted' (they have in 1780 the confidence to affirm) 'that you would keep your Treaties.' They quote a single passage, without the context, as proving the intention of Madras to consult the Nizam in 1775, which passage I have also stated and explained. It imports that having written to the Nizam the Council of Madras were to wait for his answer. But why omit the subsequent letter of the same Board upon the same topic, since the answer of the Nizam, for which alone they had waited, reached them? In 1780 we are told at Bengal, that 'when the Council there approved of this Treaty with Bazalet, in 1778, they had nothing before them but Sir Thomas Rumbold's letter, and had no conception of the disrespect shown to the Nizam by these measures.' Nothing? Had they received no letters in 1775? Had the objection of Treaties in the way never been stated? Had it not been pointedly alleged by the Council of Madras, and superseded by them? Were not these Treaties themselves before them enclosed expressly for the purpose of marking that Bazalet had violated them? Did they not look at these materials, and examine them? What advice have they given

after this examination? They do not say, 'Go to the Nizam first, with your Treaty in your hand;' but, 'Go to the Circar; take it out of dangerous hands: we must have it. When you have made it our own, treat for an equivalent, if the parties deserve that mark of attention to their interest, by opposing no force against this necessary act of justice to ourselves.'"

"Such then, after all, is the violation of those Treaties by the Council of Madras, or their President, (who it seems at this bar must always answer for them,) a violation 'gross and shameful,' as the Bill calls it; that Bill which points only at the correspondence and agreement with Bazalet Jung, for the purpose of ingrafting those invectives upon it, and omits the authority given to possess the Guntoor by force; omits the terms proposed by each of the Governments in the year 1775; omits Bazalet Jung's violation of the subsisting Treaties; omits the approbation given by the Directors themselves to the measure; and omits the Nizam's perfidy, in suffering, if not enabling, the European troops to form a junction with Hyder Ali; for whom they were destined from the first."

"By the way this injured ally, the Nizam, gave, soon after his brother had ceded the Guntoor, a

decisive and striking proof of his own perfidy, by a letter to that brother, in which he laments over the loss of the Guntoor, as a loss to their common interest. 'You should not,' said he, 'have given it up to the English. Hyder Ali should have been preferred.' Not a hint there of Treaties violated by our Government! In the very hand of Hyder himself,—in a letter to his own Vakeel at the Court of Bazalet (a direct violation of Treaty that such a Vakeel should have been there) we discover indignation against Bazalet for his preference of the English to him. 'You have given it,' says the appellant, the injured Hyder, 'to my bitter enemies, and have preferred them to me.'"

"The next article before us, is the conduct of Sir Thomas Rumbold in attempting to obtain from the Nizam a remission of that yearly sum which is called the peishcush. The charge relative to this conduct has made an impression upon the House, because the advocates who stated it, as well as the Bill, which is always insidious, have thrown a mist of prejudice over it. . . . . . .It has only to be understood, and the subtleties which entangle it will be at an end."

"The Bill calls the offence by two names, for two different purposes; and one or other of

them is, of necessity, false. But I shall prove that neither of them are true. First the application to the Nizam, in the form of a request that he would remit this tribute, is called by the name of Treaty, for the purpose of making that measure, so described, a positive disobedience of an Act of Parliament. But who will seriously affirm that, if I request an indulgence relative to some particulars of a right upon the face of an existing Treaty, I form a new Treaty by that request? In the next breath, however, it is no Treaty, for it violates another; whereas Treaty assumes the arrangement of parties, without prejudice to the rights of either, and subject, of course, to their mutual assent or disapprobation as it proceeds. But call it either Treaty or application for an indulgence, it violated no good faith, it offered no injury to the most punctilious and irritable sense of honour: it could have no view but that of advantage to the Company, at a moment of the most critical peril."........

"That a remission of this tribute was desirable, that it was just and wise to obtain it without offence to the Nizam, is perfectly agreed. The justice of it was obvious, and the letter of Treaty could alone interfere. Where, then, was the

iniquity, the violence, and the wrong of negotiating a dispensation with a law, if it may be so termed in this particular? The wisdom of the attempt is proved by the fact, that we could not pay the sum; a fact stated in other words by the accusing Counsel, as affording a reason against the attempt, viewed in the light of an injury to the Nizam. 'The House will remember,' said he, 'that at this period their want of resources, military and political, was extreme.' But was that a reason for sleeping over this oppressive claim, which hung about our necks and crushed every hope of exertion against the embarrassment of our political fortune?"......

"A strange inaccuracy occurs in the sentiments of Bengal disclosed by their letter. They, first, in express terms admit that no attempt had been made by the Council of Madras to obtain the remission of the peishcush against the Nizam's consent: yet, in the same letter, they insinuate the charge of an oppressive and most injurious violence to him, as marked in the very assurance given to him, that if the remission could not be obtained, the accrued and current tribute would be paid. The subtle ingenuity of their comment shall not be injured by me. I will state it without exaggeration. 'It is true

that you promise to pay; but you add, that you will pay when you can, and will resist violence: from which it is no strained inference to collect these two propositions. The first, that you will not pay at all; and the second, that you will resist any demand of payment by force.' A more sophistical fallacy never tortured plain words, and a context was never so mutilated. The words are:—'If all these four propositions fail, we will pay the balance due, when in cash. [We have no design to commence hostilities, or infringe any of his rights;]' (that paragraph is omitted by the commentator,) but, 'we are prepared to revenge any insults which may be offered.'"

"The only part of these instructions to Hollond which point at the policy of addressing the Nizam in a firmer tone, applies itself to the support which he had given to Lally's force in the Guntoor; and with a view to that subject, it was politic as well as just. But no passage in the letter drops a hint that Hollond should insist upon the remission proposed......'After all, (says the letter,) if you cannot obtain the remission of the entire peishcush, try to lower it; and learn if you can find an equivalent which you may tempt the Nizam to accept.'"

"I am now to lay before the House a very important fact in the conduct of the Supreme Government, and which I defy their advocates to vindicate as either politic or just. Upon the single credit of a letter from Mr. Hollond, the Resident of Madras at the Court of the Nizam, they write at once to that Prince, and suspend all further proceedings between Madras and him. Why could they not have corrected the erroneous policy of the inferior Council through that Council? Why not seem to act in concert with them, instead of disowning and affronting them at the Court of a native Prince? Their own words, which they falsely apply to Madras in the sequel, are with strict justice applicable here to themselves. 'They proclaim to all India the disunion of interest between the two Presidencies.'"

"The Directors of the Company had, in express and emphatical terms, disapproved a similar interference upon a recent occasion; but the Council of Bengal have short memories. Upon their own records, we find a letter from hence * dated February 7th, 1777. Let the Counsel for the Bill explain, why the same thing was wrong

* [That is, from the East India Directors to the Council of Bengal.—Ed.]

at Bombay, and right in 1779 at Madras. I shall quote from it without an anachronism. 'We disapprove your embassy to Poonah, without consulting first the Council of Bombay. You state, by your Ambassador, that you determine to annul their Treaty. This will degrade them in the eyes of the natives, and it will be impossible for them to conduct our affairs in future, with honour to themselves, or advantage to us.'"

"The result of this abrupt and wanton interference was of course a disagreement between the two Presidencies; but Madras bowed implicitly to the measure, disputing indeed the policy, the justice, and even the right of that control, which the Government had assumed, but making no opposition to it in fact. It is therefore clear of doubt, that if that measure had been conveyed through the Board of Madras, without any public offence to their honour, they would have co-operated most cheerfully, and surrendered their own opinions without reluctance."

"We are told that 'Madras used angry words to Bengal,' upon the occasion of this disagreement between them. It is childish to argue from angry words on either side in cases like these. It is at least a measuring cast between

the parties at variance; and, as to Bengal, the records of it contain such acrimony of debate, that you would suppose every day would produce one duel at least amongst the members of that Board. But in this correspondence I discover some facts and some arguments which strike me as commanding respect by their weight and importance. The Board of Madras first vindicate the policy of their own conduct; they lament the interference of Bengal, and the manner of it still more; they add, that nothing but misconstruction at the Court of the Nizam can account for his umbrage, *if it was even genuine*, at any of their propositions; they, however, much to their honour, give the point up, and surrender their own opinions to an act of power, though, in their sense of it, assumed and usurped. What is the answer from Bengal? 'You have yielded, and we will give you no reason.' Was that conciliatory language? But a fact appears in the letter of Madras which it imported the Council of Bengal to explain. Shah Allum had been dispossessed of his territories and his tribute by the Council of Bengal, without any reason assigned; whereas the Nizam, as it was admitted, and had been emphatically urged by the same Council, was meditating a league with the Mah-

rattas and French against the English Government."

"The natural consequences of this imperious and wanton control at Bengal over the Board of Madras were soon marked by the event. It baffled the recovery of the Guntoor,—a measure which the Council of Bengal had recently authorized. It courted the Nizam to raise his demands: he claimed the Guntoor for himself. This was poetical justice to the Council of Bengal, who had courted him in such flattering terms, after they had betrayed him at the Court of Berar......Another inconvenience arose from the suspension of those arrangements which the Board of Madras were attempting at the Court of the Nizam. If Mr. Hollond had pursued their instructions with fidelity and good sense, an immediate payment of the peishcush could have been made the just price of Lally's banishment from the Guntoor, whereas the result of this abject homage to the Nizam by the supreme Government, and of this blind confidence in his honour, was, that pretending to guard the enemies' force, he connived at their escape into Hyder Ali's quarters."

"We are next accused of 'recalling Mr. Hollond.' A very singular and refined imputation it

is. We recalled that Resident, whose continuance in office had not been desired by either the Council of Bengal, by the Nizam, or by himself; that Resident, who had been of no use to us, but had merely acted as a partizan of the supreme Government; that Resident, *who had abused our confidence, and had paid the Council of Bengal for their protection of him, by furnishing them with a victim, in place of themselves;* who had offended the public justice of the kingdom by encouraging the Mahratta war, and affording opportunity to a desolating invader's ambition. We recalled a Resident, who had proved the duplicity of his politics by writing to us a letter of *confidence,* inconsistent with his letter to Bengal. He was recalled without offence to the Nizam or himself. The Nizam had marked a very abrupt and sudden change of politics, from the moment in which the Council of Bengal disowned and affronted Madras. He saw with pleasure the discord between the two Councils, and encouraged the instrument of it. We have upon the records of this period a letter to Bengal, written by the Nizam, and altered by Mr. Hollond; (a singular feature of his intrigue and cabal, which of itself disabled him for his office;) but the unaltered parts of that letter have

shrewd sense in them, humiliating to the little politics of Bengal, and a death blow to the influence of Madras.,,......But as if the affront put already upon the Council of Madras, by suspending their instructions, was not signal enough to degrade them for ever at the Court of the Nizam, they direct the agent, Mr. Hollond, whom that Council had recalled, (by the power which had appointed him,) to be their own Resident at the same Court, for the purpose of carrying into effect a new system irreconcileable to the policy which his first credentials had authorized him to pursue. Could any act be more injurious, more oppressive, and more grating to the inferior Board? It annihilated the respect which had hitherto been considered as due to the Government of Madras; it invited the servants of that power to disobey their immediate master, and look to Bengal for impunity. Fatal politics! which at an earlier period the same Government had encouraged, by their sanction to the calumnies of Mr. Sadlier." *

* This allusion is not explained. At a later period Mr. Sadlier appears to have been chiefly instrumental to the disunion of the Council of Madras, so disastrous in its effects; and he was encouraged to play the part of informant by Mr. Hastings.

"We may now take our leave of the peishcush. It is the accuser's fallacy upon this charge to convert an equitable request into a peremptory command,—an opinion imparted under the seal of confidence into a public letter of credentials,—which the Nizam is to read. It is another of his fallacies to convert the firmness of language applicable only to the Nizam's threat of hostilities to a firmness, if not a violence, applicable to our demand of the peishcush. By the same powers of magic, in the accuser's book Hollond's disobedience of orders to conciliate becomes the obstinate perseverance of those who employed him in the most offensive mode of application. The accuser can without embarrassment expatiate upon the policy and justice of Bengal in suspending the attempts for the remission of that very peishcush, which they have themselves compelled the Nizam to remit as long as the war shall continue. He approves their control of an important measure, set on foot by the subordinate Government,—a control at once imperious and weak,—but in the next breath he brands the recall of their own Resident by the Madras Board as the torch of discord and civil war between the two Presidencies, whose mutual inter-

est it was to appear, in the eyes of the natives, one united power."

"We are next carried from the Nizam to Hyder Ali; and our hostilities to him in the Cuddapah are stated as injurious provocations of his power. The vindication of marching our troops through a part of his territories, in their way to Adoni, which is upon the western borders of the Guntoor, is very short, obvious, and complete. The equity of declared hostilities against him, at this period, was unquestionable; but I agree that it was an article of prudence to abstain from any wanton or offensive challenge to his abilities, resources, and high spirit. The same prudence warranted the risk of his displeasure upon this critical occasion. He had his eye fixed upon the Guntoor for himself: it was the direct and chief purpose of sending those troops at all to guard against him. We pass our troops through a little edge of the Cuddapah, his recent conquest, which intercepted our journey to Adoni; but we direct that offence to him or his agents may be averted by the most vigilant precautions. Yet this measure it seems, qualified as it was, 'broke the law of nations, and provoked Hyder' to enmity against the English. As if he waited for provocations, or the resentment of injuries

before he would feel that enmity, and would act upon it. Are we so ignorant of a fact, which every child knew at Madras, that Hyder had, long before this period, formed leagues with his French ally, for our extirpation? Is it forgot that Lally waited only for the most favourable season to improve Hyder's army by the European troops under his command,—by those troops which it was the policy of Bengal and Madras to banish from the Guntoor, as having been stationed there with no other view? Never, Sir, in the name of common sense, let us hear of Hyder's objections. What have they ever been, from the earliest period, but pretences of the minute (caught as he could find them, and selected with little care) for acts of hostility, operating upon a concerted and predetermined war?.........He catches at any little twig of complaint. We offended him by the measure of sending troops at all to Bazalet Jung, which he called a violation of our Treaties with him. We offended him by the civil commotions of our districts upon the border of his dominion; a complaint which he never could prove. He was offended by our capture of Mahé; and there, too, found a violation of our engagements to him. At other times he shifted the charge to Bombay,

and accused that Presidency. He complains that we forbore to assist him against the Máhrattas. But he adds to the heap an idle skirmish in his territories, which accident alone produced, and which it had been the most anxious policy of the Madras Council to obviate."

"I have at length, by many a painful step, reached the last article of charge in the accuser's volume. It states that Sir Thomas Rumbold neglected his military duties, and courted Hyder Ali's invasion, by leaving the Carnatic a sure conquest for him.......Prove but his guilt in this part of his conduct, and I will agree that he deserves, for that guilt alone, every censure in the power of this House to inflict;—except a Bill of pains and penalties;—I say, except such a Bill, because I, for one, am free to declare, that if a Minister of this country were to lose a third of the island by neglect and sleep, I could still hope to see him rescued from the torture and inquisition of Bills like these. But such being the importance of the charge, and such the effect of circulating it, before it assumed an authentic form, what is now the end of it? By an accident, we have called a witness to this part of the defence, before the accuser in his long

journey had arrived at the charge, as it stood in the Bill. That witness, the ablest engineer in the service, having detailed the whole compass of military defence, told you that everything *in specie*, the work of Sir Thomas Rumbold, was feature of peculiar activity and care.* He has also given his *general* testimony to the able and vigilant exertions of that Governor. So much for a defence against the charge thus anticipated: but what became of this charge in the adversary's own treatment of it? Not a shadow of proof attempted in support of it: the averment alone remains upon the face of the Bill, disowned by the evidence, abandoned by the accuser himself."

"The Counsel who opened the charge, whose doctrine it is that every allegation of such a Bill must criminate, and who took it for granted that evidence would justify that sting which he supposed every syllable to contain, stated round-

* [The expressions in the text are correctly printed from Mr. Hardinge's speech. It may be surmised that the meaning is, "everything after its kind," or every individual thing. But although Mr. Hardinge is close and powerful in argument, and although his composition is laboured and rhetorical, his English often reads like that of a Frenchman or (at least) a Welshman.—Ed.]

ly to us all, that Sir Thomas Rumbold, instead of putting the Carnatic in a posture of defence, had other things to mind, and prepared for his own journey to Europe: but other advocates, not professional, and long before the Bill was framed, circulated the same assertion; not because they believed that it was true, but upon other principles, and for other purposes. *They* had an interest that it should be received as true, and prejudge the victim, whom it was their policy to devote. But what said the Counsel who closed the evidence? His candour prompted him to admit, that he had neither proved, nor attempted in proof,* this important allegation; adding, with a very singular turn of argument, 'that Sir Thomas Rumbold may prove the reverse.' In other words, 'the accuser cannot stir his foot, unless we, the Counsel for the accused, will be so good as to make a case for him, by a weak defence of our client against a deserted imputation.'"

"Thus ends the neglect of the Carnatic. It is a false assertion of the Bill, and perfectly desperate, unless we should give a degree of

* [So the words stand in the carefully printed copy of the speech from which Miss Rumbold quotes, which is an elaborate specimen of typography.—Ed.]

sanction to it by our improvident support of a character which calumny alone has impeached.

"But, 'it is a negative.' I deny it: in expression it is, in argument it is not. Suppose *neglect* the word: is that a negative term? Every fact proving the Carnatic defenceless, or defensible, is an affirmative. If this doctrine of negatives can prevail, it supplies a receipt for dispensing with proofs on every charge. Here, Sir, as before, evidence which no court of law could require, not only vindicates the injured character, but points out the danger of sporting with principles of testimony, and reversing the *onus probandi.* Three favourite articles of this kind are first experiments of the Bill, and I scarce know which is the most ungenerous. Sir Thomas Rumbold is to shake off Redhead, if he can: suspicion by a hair connects them in guilt: it is for him to disunite them. His remittances are accused of a corrupt origin: he must account for every sixpence of them. The Carnatic shall be defenceless in consequence of his neglect, (says the accuser,) till he can prove the reverse. I single out these topics: but I could produce twenty more, out of the accuser's volume, in which the rule of presuming inno-

cence till crime is proved, has been trampled under."

"So much for the singular candour of inviting us to fill up the accuser's blank, and put our own figure into the niche prepared for it. But another first experiment of the Bill is, that we are called upon to answer for our successor at Madras: (and why not for the successor of that successor?) The offences of Mr. Whitehill constitute part of the Bill; and, though not read against us, they are so connected with allegations which criminate our conduct, that it is very difficult for the reader to disentangle them."

"But I must not forget 'that Mr. Smith, one of the Council, imputes to Sir Thomas Rumbold a suppression of letters, which gave him early notice of Hyder Ali's designs.' Will it ever be credited in after-times, that such an allegation, even of a Legislative indictment, could have seen the light, in so admired a period of justice and liberty as the year 1782! Has the name of Mr. Smith, to an imputation destitute of proof, more weight, because he is a witness to it, than it would have carried if he had been the accuser in form, and had imputed by this Bill? It should have less: for he does not aver the fact; stating

only that he has reason to believe it, that he has been informed of it. I answer him thus: 'It is not the fact: prove it.'"

"Here, too, it is the more ungenerous to name it, because the imputation, weak as it is in itself, deserved the less countenance upon account of the time, place, and other circumstances which attended the original delivery of it; for, it will scarce be forgot, that it was first thrown upon the party accused behind his back, and out of his reach. But why not call Smith himself to the bar? He is in England: and, sitting perhaps in your gallery, may have heard his own evidence read. This is indeed a new and most ingenious refinement of persecution; that a witness in support of it may accuse upon paper, by affirming in that shape a fact, which the accuser in form is afraid of attempting to substantiate by that same witness at the bar."

"I could now close the topic. But here, too, as in answer to half the Bill, I must fight against every shadow of suspicion, and accept every challenge with respect, if it calls in question the jealous honour of a character which calumny alone can ever depreciate. Here, too, I can state, though in the form of a Defence, not the pitiful ground of mere indemnity, or

exemption from blame, but the ingenuous pride of superior merit, and of exemplary services to the public."

"The immediate cause of the Carnatic war is a political and perhaps a very idle problem; but it is idler still to name the word provocation as applicable to Hyder Ali; to represent him as wanting provocation to justify his accommodating argument—the longer sword. But though I state the immediate cause of his invasion as problematical, I must yet lay stress upon the war against the Mahrattas; that war of Leadenhall Street, which originated in the fatal politics of Bombay, but was encouraged and fomented here. The Mahrattas are close to Hyder; they are his natural enemies; checks upon him if left alone; tools in his able hand if provoked by us to form a league with him. Self-defence, in that event, enslaves them to him; and he makes use of them, for his own general purposes of conquest, first against their persecutor, then against the suppliants themselves, persecuted by him in their turn."

"It has been sagely argued, 'that we provoked Hyder by arming the Guntoor against him;' because he, it seems, 'had an eye upon it for himself.' The fact is important, and the

reason may shift for itself: to me it appears a little Irish. Of the fact we have proof. A letter of Hyder himself to his Vakeel at Bazalet's Court, has told us that he, for whose exclusion from that Court the famous Treaty of Hydrabad, in 1768, had stipulated with so anxious a foresight, is offended with Bazalet for giving up the Guntoor to his old and bitter enemies, the English. I ask no better panegyric of the measure than such a fact. Suppose Hyder to have wrested from us the Guntoor, while Madras and Bengal were asleep, in 1776 or 1777; it would have been a more important card for him than all his present acquisitions."

"It has been also observed by another shrewd politician, that Hyder himself throws no blame upon the Mahratta war. To be sure he does not. First, how could he blame it? The Mahrattas were his ancient and habitual enemies; but, in the next place, it would have been the obvious finesse of a much weaker politician than he has proved himself, to conceal their new confederacy with him, and assign other pretences for his war against us, upon the footing of his independent claim to redress by the sword."

"It has been said that we drove, or might have driven, the Nizam into the Mahratta war,

upon the side of our enemies; yet the fact is notorious, that Hyder Ali had it in view by that war to extirpate the Nizam, and make a partition of his territories! It will appear, too, that whatever share the Nizam took in the confederacy against us, it was prior to the date of any supposed offence on our part."

"Another cause of the Carnatic war may, with some probability, be resolved into the connivance of Madras and Bengal at Hyder's known connexion with his French ally, in the Guntoor Circar, between 1775 and 1778. Lally's force, during that interval, had so increased and accumulated, that Bazalet could not have guarded us against them, if the Nizam had left him to himself; but he saved him from the risk of the attempt by taking them into his care,—till the birds were flown."

"As to the general suspicion of Hyder's purposes, for some time before he entered the Carnatic, it is a fact agreed. The Bill, which is above attention to dates when the discovery of them forms the whole difference in the argument, remarks, that Sir Thomas Rumbold and his Council had notice of Hyder's intention from the Nabob of Arcot. The fact is true; but when had he such a notice? Fourteen months before

Hyder left his capital the Nabob advised the Governor of Madras to assemble an army against him in the field. The answer of the Governor to this early notice from the Nabob is forgot by the accuser; (whose memory, as I must often observe, has whimsical flights of power and imperfection;) the answer stated as a fact that Hyder had retreated from the borders of the Carnatic to his capital; and the Nabob, apprised of that fact, had no other information, which led him to repeat the alarm during the whole remainder of Sir Thomas Rumbold's government. It was the policy of that Government partly to seem convinced of Hyder's pacific designs, and partly to conciliate him, without stooping to him; for he could not then be opposed with any chance of success. The invasion was in fact unprovoked. From so early a period as that of the first month in Sir Thomas Rumbold's government all the means in his power to conciliate Hyder were put in practice. The answers of that chief were insidious and false. But one fact is necessary to be observed, because it amounts to a most emphatical distinction between the policy of Madras and that of Bengal respecting him. I have said that it was a part of his finesse to hold himself out as the enemy

of the Mahrattas: upon the artful plea of that enmity he made propositions by his Vakeel at Madras in favour of Ragonaut Row; but the Council of Bengal paid no attention to them; they were too deep in their new politics of deserting that fugitive Prince as their ally, and of accepting the Rajah of Berar in exchange for him."

"But let us examine a little more closely Hyder's provocations. The first is, 'that in the capture of Mahé we broke our Treaty with him.' The second, 'that our agents or officers committed irregularities upon his borders;' but he never attempts any evidence of the fact. As a third he states, 'A dispute with Bombay upon the subject of Tellicherry,' in which, to do that Presidency justice, the accusation was unmerited. As a fourth, 'Our help to Bazalet Jung;' and that becomes a favourite article of complaint, though coupled in general with our capture of Mahé. He divides the remonstrance against our help to Bazalet into two parts; complaining first of any assistance to him as a violation of Treaty; and tacking to it our little skirmish with his military upon the borders of the Cuddapah in the march of our troops to Adoni. But not satisfied with all these attacks upon us, he tells

an old story of our perfidious conduct in declining to assist him against the Mahrattas. This too it seems was a violation of Treaty with him; but the complaint of it is most artfully urged in that moment, and confirms what I said of his finesse in affecting enmity against the Mahrattas, for the purpose of our delusion, while he was forming a league with them, and pointing it against us."

"Yet, Sir, any man of common discernment, if he is not an absolute novice and a child in Eastern politics, will tell you that none of these alleged provocations gave, or could have given, any real offence to him; that his provocation was the OPPORTUNITY of support from the Mahrattas and French, united in a firm league against the English Government. So much for notices, provocations, and causes of the Carnatic war."

"Let us now dissect the unprepared state of resistance, the inactivity and sleep of the Governor. His first answer shall be at Pondicherry, and the second at Mahé. Those eloquent scenes of action shall plead for him, displaying exertions no less able than spirited; the policy, that of extirpating the European competitor, and victory the mode of executing it. Sir Eyre

Coote shall speak for him in February, 1779, a testimony which does both of them honour. He shall distinguish the Board of Madras from all the other Presidencies, for their high spirit, zeal, and judicious conduct, in military as well as political resource, under a heavy load of expense, and encompassed with difficulties on every side.*

"In that same year (1779) the Board of Madras, with Sir Eyre Coote's approbation, solicited a march of the Bengal troops to their aid, but solicited it in vain; the casting vote was against them. Resources from that quarter having been thus refused or impotent; what is the general tenor of conduct observed at Madras? An apparent confidence in Hyder's professions, cold as they were; the most anxious attempts to avert the impending blow by terms with him; and, in the mean time, every possible exertion against possible impediment."

"An army could not be assembled in the field a moment before it should be necessary to be assembled for immediate action; till that moment should call for it, the funds of the settlement were not equal to the expense of such a

* See Letter from Sir Eyre Coote to the Chairman of the Court of Directors. Appendix.

measure; and the necessity so described never in fact arose while Sir Thomas Rumbold continued at Madras. But an army was at hand; and the ablest commander-in-chief could not have arranged a defensive to that amount, in the same period of time, with more consummate skill. The evidence of Major Geils has given a decisive and most honourable testimony of this fact. Great cantonments were impracticable; the expense of them would have been enormous; and the Government had a sinking treasure scarcely equal to a peace establishment; words often repeated because they cannot be too often impressed."

"In January, 1780, a return was made of the military complement, ready at a short notice for the field. Let me ask the most accomplished military experience in the East, if the cantonments of that return could have been improved? The difficulties arising from situation alone were critical. They are obvious to those who are conversant in that scene; but they are perhaps new to many in this House."

"The dimensions and shape of the Carnatic are material to be known: it is from eighty to one hundred miles in breadth; in length it forms the compass of no less than five or six hundred;

its neighbourhood is no light feature in the argument, in this view of it; bordered by active enemies to the west, by the sea to the east, and by that Guntoor to the north, which cuts off the Carnatic from the Northern Circars, and which, though it might have been our own, we have recently given to a perfidious ally. The Circars are close to the Rajah of Berar, an ally of the Mahrattas. It is true that Bengal would have made him our ally if she could; but how? By engaging to support him against the Nizam, their later favourite."

"Trichinopoli, Palemcotta, Madurah, Caracoil, and Tanjore, the chief garrisons to the south, could not be left without any defence at all: they had only ten companies, and three battalions of Sepoys."

"Had Baillie, upon the first notice of Hyder's movements from his capital, after Sir Thomas Rumbold's departure, joined the main army, instead of marching into Cuddapah, the success of Hyder would have been at least obstructed, and the garrisons of the Carnatic would have been safe."

"The Directors had ordered the Board of Madras to reinforce the operations of the Mahratta war; that fatal measure which they obsti-

nately pursued, and felt it their point of houour to push; that measure to which the culprit of this Bill was uniformly averse, and marked his aversion at the memorable period of 1780. The Council of Madras during his government, united in that opinion, were against all detachments from their force in support of those fatal politics. Early in 1778 they refused a reinforcement asked of them by that Council of Bombay, who first advised the war. But a letter from the Directors, arriving soon after this refusal, commanded implicit obedience to any such requisitions in future."

"To Bengal, however, the Board of Madras importunately urged their distress and their fears; calling upon the deaf, again and again, for an additional force and supply of treasure; yet, with full notice of those difficulties, that feeling Board, whose charity they besought, had the conscience to direct a large reinforcement of their own troops from the military of Madras, amounting to six or seven hundred, (Europeans and artillery,) with a battalion of Sepoys. This, too, was a cheat upon Madras into the bargain. Stated as a force intended against the European enemy alone, and as an olive branch upon the sword, for the purpose of terminating the Mah-

ratta hostilities, it pursued the most intemperate measures and fed the war."

"One argument for the measure at Bengal was this: 'Hyder Ali and the Mahrattas may join.' Agreed. What then? Will you therefore detach to the Coast of Malabar the force of the Carnatic, known to be the object of this impending blow, and the most vulnerable, till you have dismantled all its garrisons, and left them to the mercy of Hyder, at their elbow?"

"But new difficulties arose. In the year 1780 a hundred men, formed of a company in Lord Macleod's regiment, our chief strength, was desired by Sir Eyre Coote, for his body guard. It was refused by Sir Thomas Rumbold; but the successor was more accommodating. In the mean time Bengal had sent a very inadequate supply, after delay upon delay and reiterated importunities."

"I have stated the necessity of paying some attention to the southern garrisons. Let us now look at the nearer cantonments. Conjeveram, or Wandewash, is agreed as forming the centrical position; and the distance to it from those cantonments was between forty and fifty miles. An army could have been brought into the field in three weeks. Baillie's detachment, stationed in

the Guntoor, was the only one at a distance. ('Why stationed in the Guntoor?' ask the timid and shuffling politics of Madras in the year 1775.) But leave him there, and recall the detachment sent by the orders of Bengal; the army will then be of this amount: forty-six artillery, two thousand nine hundred and twenty-eight infantry, seven thousand seven hundred and fifty-seven Sepoys: an army considered equal to any Indian service. But if Baillie and his force had been superadded in time, the whole must have been so formidable that we may doubt if Hyder would even have encountered it."

"Our evidence will compare these cantonments to those of the period in which the government of this inactive President began; that you may do justice to his improvements of the system. As to the little out garrisons, it was better policy to have left them undefended, and even dismantled, the master of the field being sure of them."

"Stores of every kind were ample, and well supplied. When Arcot fell, the fact was proved, there at least; and that capture was the more lamented upon this account. Indeed, no principal garrison of ours had been taken at so late a

period as February, 1782. In January, 1780, hopes were formed at Madras that Hyder would not invade. But Sir Thomas Rumbold owns to the Directors, without reserve, that he has no security, and looks at the sword as hung by a little thread over us, till the Mahratta war is closed.”......

“Sir Thomas Rumbold had not left Madras, when other assurances came that Hyder would not enter the Carnatic. He was then at his capital, and the season was far advanced. No letter from the Nabob communicated any alarming intelligence; and Baillie, who watched Hyder's motions, even after Sir Thomas Rumbold quitted Madras, had formed hopes that, for that year at least, we should be safe. We had only a defensive, and it would have been perfect madness to have drawn our force from Pondicherry, or the south, till the last extremity. Hyder did not move till June, or pass into the Carnatic till July 23rd.”......

“The field artillery was complete, no one principal garrison deficient; and every loan from each of them, for the sieges of Pondicherry or Mahé, strictly paid.”

“The fortifications of Madras were favourite objects of Sir Thomas Rumbold, and formed the

most consummate works of the kind that India ever saw. We shall prove their merit by the ablest engineers in the service."

"In a system of defence thus complicated, against enemies on every side, an exhausted revenue, internal abuses, and the jealousy of the native, it was not in human power to disarm every cavil of political spleen. But who could, in general, have shown more activity, penetration, judgment, and spirit, than we have proved the features of his conduct, who, according to the Bill, deserted Madras almost in the act of opening its arms to the invader, and better prepared for his conquest, than for our defence against him?"

"Preparations against Hyder and his French ally! What else are his crimes? and what other stamp is marked upon them by the seal of truth? He prepared against these enemies of his Government the very day prior to the 24th of March,—which is the date of his first crime,—by directing the most accurate survey, and return of the defensive complement. He prepared against them, by extinguishing that flame of jealousy, the circuit: by correcting the intrigues of the subordinate: by conciliating the affections of the native at Madras: by improving

the revenue there: by assuring that improvement for a term, and by reconciling native to native, whose dissensions were always felt in the Company's treasure: by appointing Sitteram to be the Duan of a rich and extensive district; which, under his management, has proved the most liberal fund of resource to us in the war: by substituting a reform of system, in place of an odious prosecution against a personal victim, selected from his own Council, on a charge unauthenticated, and imputing to him the vice of general habit and custom: by earnest, though fruitless and baffled attempts, to extirpate Lally's troops from the Guntoor: by recovering that Guntoor into the Company's hand: by attempting the remission or diminution of a tax, which was a voluntary boon of ours in better times, accompanied by an assurance on the part of the Nizam that it never would be enforced; a tax that then we could not pay, and would have stripped ourselves to clothe our enemy: by political attentions to the Nabob, our firm ally, without prejudice to the revenue: by exclaiming, at every personal hazard, against the Mahratta war, now condemned on every side as the most animating spur to Hyder's invasion: by measures neither abject nor offensive, in his

treatment of Hyder's person: by the most rigid parsimony: by efforts almost incredible against every embarrassment, actual or foreseen: and, last of all, by the muster and arrangement of a force, which the confederates would never have looked in the face, if it had remained united, when the Carnatic received the first impression of Hyder's foot."

SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER.

ON MR. HASTINGS' POLICY IN REGARD TO THE WAR WITH HYDER, AND ON HIS RELATIONS WITH SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD'S SUCCESSORS AT MADRAS, MR. WHITEHILL AND LORD MACARTNEY, AS ILLUSTRATING HIS TREATMENT OF SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD.*

THE censure cast upon "the Authorities of the South" by Lord Macaulay, which has been noticed in some of the foregoing pages, is followed by a short account, magnificently given, of the calamity in the Carnatic, and the conduct of Mr. Hastings, on that occasion, according to the usually received opinions.

"Then it was, that the fertile genius and serene courage of Hastings achieved their most signal triumph. A swift ship, flying before the south-west monsoon, brought the evil tidings in a few days to Calcutta.......The struggle with Hyder was a struggle for life or death.......It was no time for trifling. Hastings resolved to resort to an extreme exercise of power, to suspend the incapable Governor of Fort St. George,

* First Report, Appendix, No. 43.

to send Sir Eyre Coote to oppose Hyder, and to entrust that distinguished General with the whole administration of the war."

That it was in truth a struggle for life or death was probably now felt by Mr. Hastings, and that he had trifled too long. The dangers that were gathering round the Company had been for some time known to him: he had judged that the Nizam must be conciliated at any sacrifice. The army of the Rajah of Berar advanced to the confines of Bengal, in pursuance of the engagement entered into with the confederates, must be kept in check. Still the Governor-General persisted in his Mahratta projects, undertaken doubtless with some view, present or ulterior, for the benefit of the Company and the nation, but which the various explanations offered have never rendered very comprehensible, and which in the event proved of most unsound policy, since it led the different chiefs to compose their own disputes, and re-unite to direct their resentment against us. Yet Mr. Hastings flattered himself he should redeem the past by bringing all to a favourable issue. He had disregarded the serious expostulations addressed to him for *peace with the Mahrattas, on any moderate terms;* and even after the

departure of Sir Thomas Rumbold, deaf to the warnings of the Madras Board, that Hyder's projects were ripening, and then, that he had actually invaded the Carnatic, Mr. Hastings still held on. It was only when the news of Colonel Baillie's defeat reached Bengal that it was resolved, "That all minor objects should be sacrificed to the preservation of the Carnatic, the disputes with the Mahrattas must be accommodated, a large military force and a supply of money must be instantly sent to Madras."*

Even at this conjuncture Mr. Hastings had private feelings to gratify. For the summary measure of suspending Mr. Whitehill, Sir Thomas Rumbold's successor at Madras, Lord Macaulay and other writers have lent to Mr. Hastings motives that he did not allege for himself. No person can read the correspondence that passed on this occasion between the Governor-General and Mr. Whitehill, without being aware that it was not the "incapacity of the Governor of Fort St. George" that was the cause of his suspension. Neither had Mr. Hastings any ground for supposing that all the Board of Madras, including Mr. Whitehill, would not have accepted the authority of Sir

* Macaulay's Essay on Warren Hastings.

Eyre Coote as implicitly as Sir Hector Munro appears to have done. These are motives that have been supplied to Mr. Hastings, in order to extol his conduct on that occasion, and to justify the insults offered to the Presidency of Madras.

It is time to state the facts as they may be gathered from the Appendices to the Reports of the Committee. Mr. Hastings had required the surrender of the Guntoor,* as a bait to the Nizam, rendered necessary, perhaps, by the results of his own crooked policy, and, it may be added, from the unworthy motive of defeating the work of Sir Thomas Rumbold.

The demand of Mr. Hastings was taken into consideration by the Board at Madras, who demurred†

* Second Report, Appendix, No. 98.

† August 7th, 1780, Sir Hector Munro delivered the following Minute at Madras:—

"As the giving up the Guntoor Circar, after getting possession of it, (and that with the approbation of the Supreme Council of Bengal,) may be disapproved by our employers at home, I am of opinion the Governor-General and Council's last letter ought to be answered fully; reasons given why the Guntoor Circar should not be given up; and if ultimately they insist upon it, they must in every respect be made answerable for the consequences; and I am of opinion, if it is given up, that Bazalet Jung ought to have it given to him, and not the Nizam, as we had it from Bazalet Jung; but I am for holding our possession until we have an answer to our next letter on the subject from Bengal."—Appendix to First Report, No. 8.

as to the justice and propriety of giving up the Guntoor to the Nizam, instead of restoring it to Bazalet Jung, by whom it had been ceded to them, and also from the apprehension that it would pass into the hands of Hyder; but the distress of their condition led them to comply strictly with the injunctions of the Governor-General. The Nizam was written to, to that effect; and Mr. Whitehill wrote an assurance to Mr. Hastings, that the affair should be concluded according to his desire, and as speedily as the nature of the circumstances would admit. This letter apologized for past delay, on the score of the great troubles that had intervened. Although Mr. Whitehill's letter was couched in respectful terms; yet, while yielding the Guntoor, he reminded the Governor-General that the conduct of the Presidency had been fully sanctioned by himself.*

Previously to this correspondence, every item of intelligence received at Madras respecting Hyder's motions was transmitted to Bengal, and with renewed solicitations for assistance.

On the 28th of June a letter of intelligence, dated from the Cape of Good Hope, was for-

* First Report, Appendix, No. 8.

warded to Bengal, and with it Mr. Whitehill wrote as follows:—

"You will be able to judge from these papers what credit is due to the report of a French armament preparing for India.......Should such an armament really come abroad, the object of it must be, we conceive, to aid the Mahrattas or Hyder Ali, and indeed the motions of this chief strongly indicate an expectation of powerful support from the French.......His army is now assembled at Bangalore, and equipped in every respect for immediate action. Part of it is actually advanced towards the frontiers of the Carnatic. Such is the appearance of things at present. If an invasion takes place, we shall act in the best manner we can for the defence of the country; but we fear our difficulties will be great for want of money, as our ordinary supplies depend upon the growing revenues, which, in case of invasion, will fall very short."*

Again, on the 25th of July:—

"Our last letter gave you information of the approach of Hyder Ali with a large army towards our frontiers; we now transmit two papers of intelligence just received, by which

* First Report, Appendix, No. 40.

you will learn, that he has actually detached part of his cavalry into the Carnatic, and is preparing to follow with his whole army. We are taking measures to assemble our troops in a proper situation to oppose this, and defend the country in the best manner we are able; but the alarms already occasioned, have driven the people from their habitations, and put an entire stop to the tillage of the ground."*......

And again on the 18th of August:—

"Hyder has employed a considerable body of horse in ravaging the Carnatic; and he himself, with the rest of his army, has advanced as far as Arnee, and taken three or four small forts, which were garrisoned by the Nabob's people. ......As it will be impossible for us to carry on this war without supplies from Bengal, we are anxious to be informed when, and to what extent, you may be able to supply us." †

Meanwhile an attempt was made to raise money upon bonds, but with very inadequate success.

No heed having been paid to these letters, and others which are recorded in the Appendix to the First Report; on the 14th of September,

* First Report, Appendix, No. 1.

† *Ibid.*, No. 8.

Sir Edward Hughes addressed this serious remonstrance to the Council of Bengal :—

"I think it my indispensable duty to warn you, Sir, and gentlemen, of the evident necessity there now exists to guard not only the Company's territories on this coast, but even Fort St. George itself, from the arms of France and Hyder, at this time when the whole national strength is required to make head against the combined force of France and Spain, and our rebellious colonies; and that this may be more easily and effectually done, I most earnestly wish and recommend that, laying aside all other plans of operation against the Mahrattas, or any other country powers, the three Presidencies do heartily concur by every means both of men, and money, and treaties, to reduce this habitual foe to the English nation within due bounds. As far as my knowledge of land service assists me, it appears to me, under the present circumstances, and with all the force this Presidency can possibly bring into the field, they will be in no condition to face the enemy, nor will troops alone save this sinking settlement; for I am assured by the Governor they have no money in the treasury, nor any evident means of raising it, in any proportion adequate to their present exigen-

cies. . . . . . .In effecting every service for the public good, you may be assured of my ready concurrence and best assistance." *

The "swift-sailing ship," mentioned by Lord Macaulay, as having "brought in a few days the evil tidings to Calcutta," did not, as it has been already shown, give the first intimation that Hyder had actually invaded the Carnatic. In the Appendix to the Sixth Report, No. 304, of the Committee of Secrecy, it may be seen in what manner that intelligence was first received in Bengal. It is there stated that, "on the 4th of September," Sir Eyre Coote eagerly proposed that immediate succour should be dispatched to Madras; and pointed out the treasure deposited in the new fort, as the source from which a supply might be afforded: but the Governor-General halted gravely; he had another object to work out; and to gain the concurrence of his Council in effecting this, Mr. Hastings conjures up the alarming supposition, that "at Fort St. George, the arms of the Company might possibly be employed in an unnatural and desperate opposition to their government." To the proposition of Sir Eyre Coote, that a "supply adequate to the emergency should be sent to Madras," the

* First Report, Appendix, No. 9.

Governor-General replied, "As the terms of the question do not admit of an immediate consideration of it, and we have already provided two modes of remittance, which, though not ample, will prove a sufficient relief to the immediate wants of Fort St. George, I hope the General will consent to suspend the final determination upon it, until the period in which his proposal, if approved, must be carried into execution. In the mean time we may hope to be informed of the state of that Presidency with relation to its resources, its dispositions for repelling the pretended or actual invasion, whichever it may prove, and the other distinct services to which they may propose to apply the sums afforded by this Government."

"These provinces, already very much exhausted, will not bear greater drains; nor can anything short of extreme necessity justify it in repeating them. It is therefore at least reasonable to expect that they will furnish us with previous information upon the points which I have enumerated; nay, it may so happen that by the neglect of this precaution, we may furnish them with the means of employing the Company's arms in an unnatural and desperate opposition, even to the authority of this Government,

which was appointed for their control, and to whose protection they must finally owe their existence."......

Sir Eyre Coote withdrew his proposition, thus were twenty days lost.*

On the 25th of September, when the news of Colonel Baillie's defeat had arrived, the Governor-General's measures were taken. He then declared that the condition of Fort St. George "demanded the most instant, powerful, and even hazardous exertions of this Government to avert the event portended by so many concurrent difficulties."

The obvious course was then adopted of sending the Commander-in-Chief to the scene of warfare and distress. A supply was also accorded; but this tardy supply the Governor-General placed exclusively in the hands of Sir Eyre Coote, by him to be applied to meet the exigencies of the Presidency.

What reason had Mr. Hastings to cast this stigma upon the Presidency of Fort St. George, except to shelter himself, by this pretext, from the reproach justly due to him, for his refusal to grant them timely aid?

It sounds strangely, too, that Sir Eyre Coote should have been the minister of conveying this

* Sixth Report, Appendix, No. 310.

insult to Madras; so lately had he, from his own observation, distinguished that Board from all the other Presidencies, for their zeal and judicious conduct, in military as well as political resource, under a heavy load of expense, and encompassed with difficulties on every side.*

In an eloquent address† Mr. Hastings urged Sir Eyre Coote to repair immediately to Madras, and take the whole conduct of that fatal war; but the Governor-General added, "he made no scruple to avow that the danger impending on our interests in the Carnatic might be easily repelled even with the force which it already possesses for its defence; yet he could not place any reliance upon it, unless it were properly applied and conducted, unless Sir Eyre Coote would at this time stand forth and vindicate in his own person the rights and honours of the British arms......... The addition of numbers will not relieve their apprehensions, and will but contribute to oppress the hands which have been already proved too weak to sustain the weight of an inferior charge."

It was with this salve to his conscience and his

* [The letter from Sir Eyre Coote to which Miss Rumbold here refers, is of date January 18th, 1779, and is printed at pp. 464–5 of the "Minutes of Evidence."—Ed.]

† Sixth Report, Appendix, No. 310.

reputation, and amid compliments to Sir Eyre Coote, which happily were not unaccompanied with ample supplies of money and troops, that the reproach of past neglect was disposed of, the blame of the calamities that ensued entirely cast upon the Presidency of Fort St. George, and Mr. Hastings avenged of the affronts which he conceived had been offered to his supremacy.

To Mr. Whitehill's previous communications and desire for aid no attention had been given, nor any answer made. To the letter of the 2nd of September Mr. Hastings now replies by the suspension of Mr. Whitehill from his post,* accompanied by a letter which, for its insolence and falsehood, is a curiosity.†

An account of all these transactions was written in the following manner by Mr. Hastings to the Court of Directors.

After informing them of "the extorted and palliated confession of the Nizam," to the effect

* It appears that the Council of Bengal did not very readily concur with the Governor-General in passing his sentence. It is stated in a diary written on the spot by a member of that Council, that he "objected," and that Sir Eyre Coote urged "that Mr. Whitehill was an old friend of his; but the Governor-General pressed it forward," and he was supreme in those moments.

† Second Report, Appendix, No. 100.

that it was in consequence of transactions with Fort St. George that he had formed "the grand confederacy," Mr. Hastings continues, "We have exhausted our treasury; we have deprived ourselves of the flower of our army for their relief; we have abandoned our own measures *in the crisis of their success*.........I hope it will not appear the assumption of undue merit to observe that, extensive as are the aids which we have already afforded them, and at a season in which your service has interdicted the navigation of those seas, the ships arrived at Fort St. George in less time than two months from the date of the calamity which furnished the occasion for them." *

In representing the affair of Mr. Whitehill to the Directors and the public there was a difficulty to be got over. The letter from Mr. Whitehill of the 2nd of September, which gave a full assurance of compliance with Mr. Hastings' requirements, and that the delivering up the Guntoor should be expedited, had been received before the resolution to suspend Mr. Whitehill on account of non-compliance was declared.

The letter of the 2nd of September was fol-

* Sixth Report, Appendix, No. 328.

lowed by another, dated the 23rd, which announced that the affair was terminated. When Mr. Hastings related this transaction to the Directors, he spoke only of the last letter received, by which he would make it appear that this was the first notification he had of Mr. Whitehill's compliance.

Mr. Hastings wrote as follows :—*

"We proceed now to inform you of an important resolution which we have lately found it necessary to pass for the support of the honour of our Government, to enforce a due obedience to our orders, and to manifest to the native powers of this country, that the controlling power which they knew to be vested in us by the laws, will, if occasion should require it, be effectually exerted for the honour of the British nation, and in support of their promises and treaties. The alternative at our choice was, the removal of Mr. Whitehill from the government of Fort St. George, or by our indolence and inattention to the support of your honour and our own authority, to give license and permission to the dependent Presidencies to disobey our orders, and by acts, done at their pleasure, to annul our treaties and engagements."

* First Report, Appendix, No. 17.

"You will observe by our consultations of the 13th ultimo, that we were then informed, by letter from the President and Select Committee of Fort St. George, dated 23rd September, of the measures which they had at length been pleased to adopt, for giving effect to our requisition of the 12th of June, by immediate orders to their officer commanding in the Guntoor Circar, to deliver over that country to Bazalet Jung's agent; and by procuring an order also from the Nabob to his Aumildars to relinquish all concern in the management of the revenue."

With this equivocating statement, Mr. Hastings wound up an affair, more disgraceful, in truth, to himself, than to his victim. From that time, however, "the creature," Mr. Whitehill, has been held forth as such a monster of iniquity, that the page seems contaminated in which his name occurs. What is known of Mr. Whitehill? Only that he told the truth to Mr. Hastings; that he was included with three others, who stood high in the favour of the Company before, and also, it appears, afterwards, in the accusation made by Mr. Sadleir;* that he had been instrumental a short time previously

* Supplementary Appendix. Third Report, No. 4. Also, Third Report, pp. 600, 601.

in the suspension of the same Mr. Sadleir from the service of the Company;* and that he, with the three others, was charged by Mr. Sadleir with having been guilty of a fault so common, and in those days esteemed so venial, that when Mr. Cotsford, who held the same office at Masulipatam, was examined on the subject before the Secret Committee,† he plainly declared that "he should have thought it his first duty to enforce the payment of the Company's tribute, without suffering his own interest to interfere with it; but that he did not mean to say, he should have declined *the customary advantages of his situation.*" It is also urged that the suspension of Mr. Whitehill by Mr. Hastings only preceded the sentence of the Directors by a few months: ‡ this condemnation, however, was ostensibly for having concurred in measures of which the Honourable Court had long had a perfect knowledge, and of which it had testified only approbation.

When Mr. Hastings acted so bold a part he must have known well the ground upon which he stood, and must also have prepared the way.

* Evidences, p. 298, and p. 11.—Consultations of the Presidency of Fort St. George, of the 17th of December, 1766, are referred to.

† Fourth Report, Appendix, No. 23.

‡ Second Report, Appendix, No. 153.

A conduct very similar to that which he had pursued towards Sir Thomas Rumbold, was repeated by Mr. Hastings in the case of Lord Macartney, and with a result also successful in a great degree, notwithstanding the powerful support which Lord Macartney commanded at home. This is described in Mr. Barrow's Life of Lord Macartney, and very strongly by Mr. Mill. In these histories we are told of "depositions received and sent home, with other papers of complaint and accusation, against Lord Macartney, without even referring such papers to him for his justification against the groundless charges they contained, or without even acquainting him that such charges had been preferred."

"By these means," (the Council of Fort St. George said in a letter to Mr. Hastings,) "you left them the benefit of a first and long impression before any defence could follow on our part, depriving us, until it may prove too late, of the opportunity to deny, or refute, or explain, the charges...It was a cause, it seems, only to be heard on one side." Mr. Mill describes at length "the machinations" of Mr. Hastings against Lord Macartney, the inequitable means he used to get up information, and the secret manner in which it was transmitted to the

Directors, contrary to the usual rules of the service. We are told also of "assumed authority and interference with another Presidency, which had called forth a rebuke upon the Supreme Council from their masters, for carrying their pretensions beyond the intent of the Company;" also of "*inveigling from their service and obedience the servants of the Madras Presidency.*"*

An explanation of this determined hostility to Lord Macartney is offered by Mr. Barrow, who suggests it as "not improbable that the rivalship of his known abilities might perhaps have been as much dreaded as the weight of his supposed interest, which some of the Council apprehended could not fail to relieve Mr. Hastings from his station sooner than either he or they wished."

It is impossible not to trace the dealings of Mr. Hastings with regard to Sir Thomas Rumbold in some part to similar motives; nor can this supposition be considered groundless, when it is remembered that Sir Thomas Rumbold had been named on a recent occasion (1773) to succeed Mr. Hastings in the government of Bengal, and that his early career at Madras had been

* Mill's History of British India, vol. iv., p. 161. Late Edition, by Professor Wilson.

successful, and had received marked approbation at home.

Mr. Barrow also states that "Lord Macartney had early information of the apprehension entertained of him by the members of the Bengal Government, and he omitted no occasion to efface from their minds an impression so injurious to a cordial co-operation of the two Presidencies. In vain, however, did he give Mr. Hastings the most positive assurances that he had never harboured a thought of succeeding to Bengal; that his views were very remote from any thing in India," &c.

Still less, it may be affirmed, could Sir Thomas Rumbold have aspired to supplant Mr. Hastings: his government of Madras had been understood to be temporary, and occupied only until Lord Pigot, who was recalled, should return and resume his post. The failure of health, with other circumstances, placed it out of the question.

But whatever consideration may be due to the above suggestion, the conduct of Mr. Hastings on this occasion was influenced by weightier motives: he was successful to a great extent, in his own time, in making Sir Thomas Rumbold chargeable with the misfortunes that fell upon the Carnatic. Every history has followed in his

lead, and the spirit of Mr. Hastings has reigned triumphantly until this day.*

It is this circumstance which has rendered it needful to enter at so great length into a consideration of the personal relations between Mr. Hastings and the Governors of Madras. He quarrelled in succession with nearly all of them. But Sir Thomas Rumbold appears to have been, more than any of them, the object of his jealousy and animosity. This vindication does tardy justice to Sir Thomas Rumbold. In so doing it has been unhappily necessary to expose the policy and conduct of Mr. Hastings.

* The following extracts from Francis' diary throw light upon the subject of Mr. Hastings' relations with Sir Thomas Rumbold.

"June 6th, 1778.—Panton leaves Calcutta dissatisfied with H[astings] and B[arwell] for not paying him the freight on ten lacs here. Being ashamed or afraid to do it themselves, they have thrown that difficulty on Rumbold."

"Nov. 6th, 1778.—A letter of Rumbold's, with advice of the taking of Pondicherry."

"Nov. 17th.—Capitulation of Pondicherry received. Hastings expresses the highest dissatisfaction at the terms, &c.........He means nothing but to throw a *sneer* at Rumbold and Munro."

"Oct. 25th, 1779.—H—— seems to have an avowed antipathy to Rumbold, &c."

APPENDIX

OF

STATEMENTS AND DOCUMENTS,

RELATING CHIEFLY TO THE ACCUSATIONS BROUGHT AGAINST SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD IN REGARD TO HIS TREATMENT OF THE ZEMINDARS:

CONSISTING FOR THE MOST PART OF

EXTRACTS FROM SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD'S "ANSWER TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRECY."

ILLUSTRATED BY NOTES FROM MR. HARDINGE'S DEFENCE OF SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD, AND ALSO BY NOTES MADE BY THE COMPILER, MISS RUMBOLD.

APPENDIX.

"In the long interdict dispatched from the India House, January 10th, 1781, the abolition of the Committee of Circuit is ascribed to the most corrupt motives. It takes the lead of all other offences, and is represented to have given birth to them. It is at once the apology of the honourable Directors for their own ignorance of the essential interests of the Company, and the engine of their vengeance against a man who, to speak temperately, was better informed. They treat it as a violation of their most positive and unequivocal commands,—commands that could not be mistaken, and that gave no latitude for the exercise of discretion." (Appendix, Second Report.)

"I shall not here enter into the merits of the institution. Let it be allowed to have been wise, politic, necessary: it had been abjured in principle, and suspended in fact, by the Directors themselves. Abjured in principle, by their condemnation of another Committee, the express model of this; suspended in fact, by a recall of its genuine members then acting upon the service, without substituting others in their place."*

* "The orders of 1775, for the Committee of Circuit, refer to the model of Bengal—a model which had not then been tried. It was tried afterwards, found impracticable, (though not in time of war,) and a source of oppression to the natives. Struck with it as ruinous, the Directors observe to Bengal, in 1777, 'that it has lessened the confidence of the Zemindars in our Government, and has occasioned great alarm.' They even lay particular stress upon the substitution of junior servants as 'making bad infinitely worse.' Sir Thomas Rumbold signed this letter a little before he left England, signed it in co-operation with

"The orders that were carried out by Lord Pigot, in April, 1775, for the appointment of a Committee of Circuit, demand attention, as they were the only orders that have been issued from the Direction with regard to this important business.

"'We direct that a Committee of our Council, consisting of five members, be appointed to make the circuit of the Northern Circars.' It should be observed that the Council under Lord Pigot consisted of *nineteen* members. The Council over which I had the honour to preside, consisted of only *six* members, including the Governor and Commander in Chief, with strict injunctions to remain at, and not to be employed out of, the Presidency."*

"The troubles that distracted the government of Lord Pigot prevented, under his administration, the complete execution of the orders his Lordship carried out. Under the Government which immediately preceded mine, a Committee of Circuit was

the Directors. Though he had so lately left that Board, he had no instructions on the subject; but on other parts of his future conduct very marked and special directions. The Directors know in March, 1779, that Sir Thomas Rumbold has discontinued the Committee of Circuit. Do they disapprove of that measure? Do they censure him in general terms? No, they give him their warmest thanks for his important services to the Government; and they do not accompany this tribute of approbation with any hint that he has done wrong, though we are now told by the accuser, the measure of putting that Committee in force admitted not a moment's delay. Why not press it upon him in 1779, or in 1780? Why did they not press it upon Lord Macartney, the successor of Sir Thomas Rumbold? A year has passed, and no Committee has yet stirred. In fact, the orders presume a time of peace. Would not a change of circumstances alone abrogate or suspend the letter of the requisition?" (Mr. Hardinge's Defence.)

* "The truth of this assertion will be brought to light whenever the Court of Directors shall be compelled to produce documents to which they have refused me access, and which they have probably withheld from the Secret Committee, since the Report asserts, that 'this Commission was not accompanied by any collateral instructions.'" (Second Report, vol. vii., p. 271.)

"This change in the form of the Council is utterly unnoticed in the Report of the Committee, and the injunction to remain at the Presidency is not to be discovered even in the Appendix."

indeed appointed; but, in direct contradiction both to the letter and the spirit of the orders given in 1775, it was entirely composed of junior servants."

"In my peculiar situation, and in the midst of the distresses that surrounded the Company's affairs, when I assumed the Government, I was indeed compelled to have recourse to a construction of the orders of the Honourable Court. The spirit and intention of the original orders by which the Committee of Circuit was appointed, was, in one essential point, evidently to introduce a direct intercourse between the distant dependencies, and the Presidency; to destroy too close and intimate a connexion between the renters and tributaries of the Company and their junior servants; to reform the abuses that had long disgraced the subordinates, and to restore control to the Fort St. George. But in what manner was this object to be effected? The contradictory regulations of the Honourable Court had rendered it impossible for the Council to move towards the Zemindars. The only practicable measure that presented itself was to treat with the Zemindars at the Presidency."

"I have nowhere represented the calling the Zemindars to Madras as being free from objection, or unattended with difficulties. Perhaps, in the conjuncture in which it was adopted, it was the only politic measure that could have been devised. It had the recommendation of being summary in its effect, at the same time that it respected the ancient habits and prejudices of the country in the mode."

"That the first suggestion of such a measure should spread an instant alarm, and excite a general conspiracy among the subordinate Chiefs and Councils, was perhaps the surest test of utility. During twelve years, they had governed the affairs of the Circars by their absolute authority. With what advantage to the Company, is demonstrated by the amount of hopeless balances, and by the general ruin of the Zemindaries; with what satisfaction to themselves, may be inferred from the universal apprehension, so clamorously expressed, of the interference of Council. That the Zemindars should be disinclined to concur in any investigations that should tend to enhance

their tribute or to expedite the liquidation of accounts, which had perhaps been purposely embroiled, was not unnatural."

"I appeal to the candour of the Secret Committee, whether in common cases they would not regard such an uniformity of wishes between the stewards and the farmers of a distant and unproductive property as a suspicious circumstance, and by no means favourable to the principals. The investigation of a Committee of Circuit had caused little anxiety to the subordinate Councils, because the operations of such a Board were necessarily slow; it was also easy to create perpetual obstructions to its progress; but principally, because, by an additional construction of the Company's orders, they were deemed capable of occupying a place at that Board, and thus forming a part of that very Committee intended for the control of their own intrigues. But the movement of calling the Zemindars to the Presidency aroused them to an active centre of union against the Presidency of Madras.* Let me now be allowed to call attention to the consternation which overwhelmed the Zemindars upon the appointment of this Committee, the very corruptions of which were to be treated as sacred; let me be allowed to contrast this sense of terror and distrust with the 'reluctance' said to have been shown by the Zemindars to the measure I am defending. The picture asks no colouring from

* "Second Report, p. 10. See the whole of that and the following page, in which it is remarkable that no authority is cited for the objections of the Zemindars to attend at the Presidency, but that of the subordinates. The attendance of all who gave plausible reasons was dispensed with. Those from the most remote districts were excused without exception. From Vizagapatam the Rajah Vizieram Rau-ze alone attended. He had been prevented by the intrigues of the Council coming at an earlier period. Upon the receipt of my letter, he set out without the slightest hesitation. (Appendix, Second Report, Nos. 16, 28, 45.) It was indeed pretended that this measure would obstruct the liquidation of accounts, and distress the subordinate Presidencies; but it is a fact well known, that the greater part of the Zemindars did not set out for the Presidency until the end of May, that all balances ought to have paid by the end of March, but that no payments whatsoever had been made. The distresses of the subordinate were relieved by the Presidency, but were not enhanced by the measure in question."

my hand; it is given in all its strength by the Board of Circuit itself."

"'The appointment of the Committee of Circuit may naturally be supposed to have created very great alarms among the Zemindars in general. Those who may have found means to inform themselves of the Company's intentions, will endeavour to engage the other Zemindars in a combination to oppose their being carried into execution. No more dependence can be placed on their attachment to our interest, now the alarm is given, than if hostilities had actually commenced against them.'" (See Appendix, Second Report, No. 18.)

"It will no longer create surprise that the measure I proposed was adopted by the Council of Fort St. George unanimously, although a majority of that Council having antecedently concurred in the appointment of a spurious Committee of Circuit, had prejudices of their own to overcome, before they could embrace the new ideas I presented to them. They embraced them, however, but not (as insinuated by the Secret Committee, and insisted upon by the Court of Directors) without all the knowledge of the subject that could be obtained from long experience and careful investigation. Their conviction arose from their perfect possession of the business before them. They felt the general distress of the revenue, and were sensible that the stoppage of all payment from the Circars, in particular, was occasioned by abuses, which had long subsisted at the inferior governments. They saw the absolute necessity of controlling the power of those Councils; and with a view to that important object, some of them had thought themselves justifiable in consenting to the appointment of a Committee of Circuit, composed of members whose station in the service, by the express orders of the Company, as well as the spirit of the institution,* precluded them from belonging to that Board. But

* I quote here from Mr. Hardinge's Defence.

"If all the Zemindars had protested against the attendance, (than which nothing can be more false; in fact none of those who came expressed any reluctance whatever,) it would form a mutilated ground of argument even upon the subject of their aversion to the measure. They should be asked when they returned, asked at this hour, if it was

the face of things was changed. The progress of a Committee of Circuit, at best a hazardous experiment, would now have been fatal. Undoubted intelligence had been received of

injurious to them, or so understood and felt. They had many dissensions among themselves. The culprit of this Bill treated their grievances, and executed justice amongst them, without giving offence to any of them." (Of the Zemindars who came, twelve presented petitions for grievances the local Boards had been inadequate to redress. Of these, some wrote letters joyfully accepting the summons.) "This permanency of tribute was also an acquisition of important advantage to us; although it is true that it tempted the Zemindars to engage for a larger payment than in strict justice, or sound policy, could then be required of them. The result has been, the most ingenuous wish and zeal on their part, that no arrear should be left; but a real incapacity has hung over them, and obstructed their efforts. Yet, I shall prove at the Bar, that in consequence of the arrangements made with them at Madras, they have paid into the Company's treasure a portion of revenue unexampled in the same period of time. The Zemindars of Masulipatam owed for tribute, £203,636. They owed in debts to the bankers, £232,732, for which they paid interest at the common rate of two and a half per cent. a month.......We are told the subordinates of Masulipatam represented the absence of the Zemindars as tending to impede the collection of the revenues. How is it the Zemindars were become solvent, and even desirous to pay, just at the moment they received notice of the journey to Madras? Sir Thomas Rumbold comments upon these evasive accounts from the subordinates. 'We must guard against these enormous balances, but let us first ascertain them: let us hear the Zemindar, and redress the injuries he has received.' As to the loans from the bankers, Sir Thomas Rumbold proposed means for the abolition of the pernicious customs that had obtained; but his general plan of conduct to the Zemindars would of itself produce the effect of lowering the bankers' interest, because, in proportion as the term of the Zemindar in his land is made secure, the interest or premium for the loan is reduced.......I lay no inconsiderable stress upon the fact that every Zemindar of Masulipatam owed the same portion of arrear; a fact that admits of no solution but one; neglect of all the arrears, from a certain period, by system: for the personal situation of every Zemindar could not be the same. Let me call the attention of the House to the manner in which the Bill states the distance between the residence of the Zemindars and Madras; it names only Ganjam and Vizigapatam, the most distant by a proportion of more than half. The nearer districts are entirely overlooked, although no fewer than seventeen came from

approaching hostilities with France. A formidable body of French, under Monsieur Lally, were actually stationed in the Guntoor Circars, ready to avail themselves of the first appearance

thence. Very large payments in discharge of their tribute were made by the Zemindars during their stay at Madras; by the Vizianagrum family upwards of £23,000, by the Masulipatam Zemindars upwards of £78,000. I agree, that some additional expense was incurred by these journeys. Sir Thomas Rumbold lamented over it himself. He sent circular letters to every Zemindar, which recommended that as little expense of this kind as possible should be incurred.

"The real objects of the Orders of 1775 were two: increase of English revenue by an act of despotism, and a reduction of Eastern power by force. As to the reduction of their military, it became, in 1778, a desperate attempt. Government was not equal to it; and it would have been madness at that period, if it could have been accomplished, because it must have impaired our defence, and shaken their attachment. The Zemindars had not fewer than thirty thousand men in arms, independent of the force necessary to the collections of revenue and their internal defence.

"Let me ask the House: Are they fairly possessed of these Orders in 1775? I believe they are not. Of this I am sure, that the Bill has not stated them. It has, in stating what it represents them to be, committed a falsehood of the worst kind; a suppression of truth. It has even omitted a hint of that object which forms two-thirds of them; alone occupied the Committee when they acted; and so occupied them, as to endanger the allegiance of the natives by the alarm of it. Their letter has been read by the accuser; but he has only read two or three passages of it, which it strikes him criminate Sir Thomas Rumbold. He omits the reception of the Orders, the general plan of the Zemindars to resist them, and an express hint of the Committee, 'that no faith can be reposed in the natives any more; that alliances will soon be formed between them and the Mahrattas,' &c.; to say nothing of the local impediments which the acting Committee announces in detail in their letters. They soon want military for the survey alone; and feeling themselves the instruments of tyranny, with a power unequal to it, solicit a reinforcement. The Zemindars, it seems, are afraid, that if a new and foreign military is once imposed upon them, the increase of their tribute will only pave the way to a forcible possession of their land; a fear which the recent experience in Bengal, and the Orders themselves, would rather encourage than refute. Look at Bengal, the circle where these reforms have been attempted. Farmers, and best bidders for the land, men of straw and adventurers, have squeezed all they could from the heart of the country, ruined the

of disaffection in those parts. The march of a detachment against the Mahrattas had spread general alarm. Hyder was in motion. Monsieur de Bellecombe, who was arrived at Pondicherry with extraordinary powers, had sent an Embassy to that chief, and had demanded a conference with him. In these circumstances, the appearance of a Committee of Circuit would have shaken the dependency of the Circars. On the other hand, had the intrigues and influence of the subordinate Councils been suffered to continue, all hope of a revenue from these countries

cultivators, and fled. On the other hand the dispossessed Zemindar has often abandoned the district; the natives and cultivators have gone after him. What have the Company done? Tempted them back almost on their own terms.

"It is stated in the Orders that the Zemindars are too formidable to their neighbours, and even to the Government. They can be formidable, I agree; but injuries alone will make their power dangerous. Treat them well. They are firm in their allegiance, and their power is useful to us. It has been useful to us; and their zeal in our service, ever since the guilt of Sir Thomas Rumbold was incurred by his treatment of them, has been uniform. The Zemindars of the north have great influence, and Lord Macartney, who succeeded Sir Thomas Rumbold as Governor of Madras, has told the Company what an important resource he has found in their fidelity and zeal.

"Sir Thomas Rumbold's Government was temporary and under peculiar circumstances. It was calculated for the purpose of conciliating those tributaries who were in general habits of allegiance, though lately offended, in order to act with all the united powers of the settlement against the foreign invader, and those country powers who were likely to be seduced into arms by his intrigues, and their own ambition. The Zemindars were now in disgust. Had we hurled at them this execrated Committee of Circuit, it is not too much to say, we should have lost the Northern Circars. The fact is known that all our troops which must have been employed in the odious service of disarming the Zemindary force, if the Committee had proceeded, were employed at Pondicherry. The Northern Circars would therefore have been defenceless, and open to Lally, from the Guntoor, if their native military had been reduced. Instead of exposing ourselves to any such embarrassment, we sheltered the Circars, though we hired a part of their troops in a more active and profitable service; their political zeal was animated in our cause, and we found in their courage and fidelity an important acquisition."

must have been abandoned. The only measure which seemed calculated to obviate the mischiefs that threatened on all sides was to call the Zemindars to the presidency. It remains to show that the manner of treating with those chiefs, and the agreements concluded with them, were as little liable to objection as the measure itself. The first remark upon this subject prefers against me a charge of having usurped the province of the whole Council, by precluding all investigation, and taking upon myself exclusively the settlement of all leases."

"'The different Zemindars,' says the Report, 'were never treated with, in regard to the leases of their lands, by the Board collectively, nor in consequence of any investigation before them, but merely by the Governor in person, whose report was in every instance held to be sufficient.' (Second Report, pp. 10, 12.)"

"It cannot be expected that the Secret Committee should, in an instant of time, have been able to unravel such a mass of confusion, as the Rules of the Company's service; nor is it my business to enter into a defence of those Rules. To state the Rule in the present case,—a Rule which can be no secret to the lowest clerk in the India House, will be sufficient for my justification, and will fully counteract the effect of a suggestion which recurs in every branch of the inquiry, relative to this subject. It was not merely the custom of the service; it was the express duty of my office, to investigate, to treat, and to suggest proposals to the Board. In all transactions similar to that in question, the President is the immediate acting man. It is a peculiar obligation arising from the nature of his commission. It is a trust which is in an especial manner committed to him; and it would be a breach of that trust to surrender it into other hands. I appeal for the truth of this position to the experience of every man who has ever been employed in the service of the Company. The Court of Directors, not contented with holding so essential a circumstance from the knowledge of the Secret Committee, have not scrupled themselves to found the charge of a black crime upon this exercise of a known and indispensable duty. I have said

that it was the peculiar province of the President to inquire, to report, and to offer proposals to the Board; but I will not do the Council the injustice to insinuate that the state of the Zemindaries was investigated by me alone. The same sources of information were open to every member of the Board. The Zemindars had free communication with all who were desirous to confer with them; and were personally known to all the members of the Board. I submitted to Council the best lights my industry could collect; and if the Board acquiesced in the results of my inquiries, it was, doubtless, because they were confirmed by their own.

"'The Report observes,' (Second Report, page 17,) 'that the exhausted state of the Company's Treasury and unavoidable increase of expenditure were urged by the Governor as reasons for taking low rents.'

"They were indeed urged as reasons for taking a real and permanent revenue, instead of nominal increases, which no industry could enable the Zemindars to make good; they were urged as reasons for avoiding, at that crisis of public danger, all speculative projects, which might retard balances, stop the revenue, and disturb the tranquillity of the country. It is admitted also that I urged that due care should be taken to recover outstanding balances. It might have been added, had such a confession been consistent with the views of the Court of Directors, 'that those balances were actually in a course of liquidation.'

"Let me here be allowed to observe, that the Zemindars cannot with propriety be considered as *renters* of the Company. From the language which the Court of Directors have lately adopted, the public must be led to infer, that the Company have not barely succeeded to certain rights of sovereignty in this country, but that they are become exclusive proprietors of the soil! and that these noble Zemindars, the real and the sole owners of the lands, which they inherit from a line of ancestry that would appear fabulous in Europe, had on a sudden been converted into farmers, or rather peasants and labourers in the Company's fields. The tribute, not rent, paid

by these chiefs to the Mogul invaders, (who were never able entirely to subjugate their country,) was a sort of ransom of their ancient independence. It was the price of a quiet possession of their property, their privileges, customs, and habits. It was always assessed with moderation; and with a just regard to the immense establishments, which the opinion of the country renders it necessary for persons of their consequence to keep on foot. The Soubah settled with the Zemindars, without attempting to interfere with the collection. It would have been happy for all parties, if the same wise maxims had been respected after the cession of the Circars to the Company. The country would then have flourished, and the Company's affairs would have prospered with the prosperity of their tributaries: to found this prosperity on the basis of reciprocal confidence and security, and to fix the proportion of the tribute on principles of policy and justice, were the ends of my inquiries, and the objects of my representations to the Board on this subject: that the ruined condition of the Zemindaries would not permit the tribute to be advanced in the proportions I had expected and proposed, was to me a source of inexpressible mortification. But I was compelled to yield to circumstances. The exigency of the situation called for some decisive remedy, delay was ruin, and the slow inquiry,* formerly recommended by the Directors, equally useless and impracticable. The single expedient which policy could suggest, and the crisis of affairs would admit, was adopted by the Presidency. A fixed tribute, for a fixed period, was the only means of restoring industry, of removing from the minds of men the terror of increasing exactions, of giving substance and stability to the rights of the Company. The practice of granting yearly leases was undoubtedly more favourable to the views of interested individuals, but would soon have proved equally destructive to the tribute and the tributaries. The

* Lord Pigot maintained that the business of the Committee of Circuit would take years to execute. (See Appendix, Second Report, No. 6.)

under tenants, for whom the Court of Directors express so much affectionate concern, will never engage with spirit in the business of cultivation, until they know whether any part of their crop is to remain to them. The agreement I entered into for the fixed term of five years, may perhaps enable the country to recover from its languishing condition. Such a measure was at least calculated to restore some degree of credit to the Company's Government. I knew that conciliation was of as much consequence as tribute. I preferred a moderate, but certain, increase of revenue, to more brilliant but treacherous hopes, that led to hazardous experiments. I secured a revenue; I did more, I secured the country.

"The measures of my administration had more connexion with the late transactions in the Carnatic than my *friends* have been willing to admit; a connexion equally honourable to me and beneficial to the service. I established tranquillity in the Circars; where at the present period, more than at any other, it is essential to the preservation of our influence, or dominion over them, that no just cause of discontent, or pretence for complaint, should be furnished by Government. Hyder's plan and principles of government stand high in the estimation of the inhabitants of those countries. If they had been irritated at that crisis, by so offensive an innovation as the progress of a Committee of Circuit, however constituted, or if the uncertainty of their tenure, or the vexations of government, had driven them to seek a change, they would have found a protector in Hyder Ali, who, by making an effectual use of the numerous advantages he would have derived from the acquisition of the Circars, might at this time have been master of the whole coast of Coromandel, and might have accelerated the ruin of the English affairs in Hindostan.*

"It is remarked by the Secret Committee, on more than one

* I cannot resist observing here, that although the account of every transaction has been, I may fairly say, garbled in passing through the hands of the Secret Committee, sometimes by falsifying figures, at others, suppressing whole sentences; this case is among the most insidious, as it requires explanation to detect.

occasion, and with some appearance of dissatisfaction, that the agreement entered into for an increase of twelve and a half per cent. to the revenue '*was an addition on the old Moorish rental.*' (See Second Report, pp. 14, 17.) It will therefore be necessary to observe, that in all additions to the revenue, it has been the general, if not the constant, practice to fix the proportion of the increase upon the 'Assant Jumma,' (or the old bargain with the Moguls.) In a country where usages as such become sacred, it is surely policy to conform to them. I did so in the present instance. But it must not from hence be inferred that this increase of twelve and a half per cent. upon the old rental, is the only increase which has taken place since the government of the Moguls. The unhappy natives have been no gainers by this deference to their ancient forms. The sum total of the additions made to the revenue, at different times, since the accession of the Company to the Circars, amounts to above fifty per cent. upon the old establishment. An enormous exaction; and far more oppressive to the Zemindars than an equal augmentation would have proved, under their Mohammedan masters; inasmuch as the perquisites of the Mogul officers are comprised in the estimate which is improperly called the Moorish rental; whereas, in the later agreements, as existing when I came to the Government, those perquisites were not taken into the account, nor were the extortions of the Company's servants subject to any better control than their own discretion.

"The real blame to which the proceedings of the Board on the present occasion is exposed, consists in their having exacted *any* increase of tribute from the Zemindars, at the period of their distress; a distress which surely cannot be unknown to those who have so feelingly represented the extreme difficulty with which most of those chiefs 'provided for a journey of three hundred * miles,' and with which some of them were enabled to maintain their families with common decency at home. (See Second Report, p. 13.) The balances already due,

* The average distance. Some were below that.

were in truth too heavy to admit of an additional load. But tribute is the constant cry of the Court of Directors, nor can any measure engage their support that does not come recommended by some new imposition upon the tributary."

"If the arrangement of a moderate increase of tribute for a fixed term,* (an arrangement which has been demonstrated to be equally beneficial to the Zemindar and the Company,) be suffered to subsist, and if the peace of the Circars be maintained, every fresh dispatch from India must bring additional confirmation of what I have advanced. And the Honourable Court will act a more candid part, if, instead of persisting in the 'impossible' attempt 'to ascertain the amount of damage to be sustained by the Company, in consequence of my engagements,' (see Second Report, p. 17,) they will avail themselves of the ample means they are probably possessed of already, *to ascertain* the advantages secured to the Company, and the mischiefs averted, by the measures established in the course of my administration."

Before closing this part of the subject it will be well to

* "'But our agreement was 'dissatisfactory' to the Directors, on account of the term and the sum. A shameful allegation! If it had been satisfactory to them, would it be a competent plea in our favour if the measure had been arraigned by the legislature? Imputations of crime, from whatever source they come, are neither proofs nor even testimonies of it. If the Directors are to decide upon Sir Thomas Rumbold, those Directors who in 1781 devoted him as the victim of their calumny and resentment, what innocence could save him? I would not insure his life an hour. The *sum*, indeed, and the term of the assessment are not arraigned by the Bill. I may therefore assume that they are unexceptionable. The accuser's Counsel has read that part of the Philippic in 1781, which enumerates in the lump all the iniquities of Sir Thomas Rumbold, but says nothing of the very point for which it is read, namely, the reason which the Directors assigned for their censure of the new tribute settled at Madras. The revenue was increased by a temperate but solid accession to it, amounting to thirty-six thousand pounds a year; the payments, ever since the last leases of the Zemindary lands at Madras, have been more punctual than ever, and the affection of the native has been engaged in our service." (From Mr. Hardinge's Defence.)

prove by a reference to the "Minutes of the Evidences," that all these measures were fully communicated to the Court of Directors by the President and Council of Madras. (See pp. 204, 208, 209, 219, &c.) After adverting to the original orders for the Committee of Circuit, and the change of circumstances then existing, and "because the time allotted for its operation had been suffered to waste in fruitless disputes," the President lays before the Directors the reasons that led to the adoption of the present plan. "Hitherto," he says, "the Zemindars have been taught to consider the local Councils under which they were respectively placed, alone as the Government to which they were to look up, and from which no appeal was to be made. The plan we have adopted is a means of striking at the root of this evil by giving them a confidence in us, and teaching them to make their appeals in all cases of grievance and oppression to that tribunal, which alone is fully adequate to redress them." In May, 1778, he writes, "That a shameful scene of abuse has been acted, that the mutual interests and the intrigues of the subordinate Councils and that Presidency, have weakened the confidence of the natives in our dominion, and have kept the troops of the Company continually in the field, on various pretences, and wasted their strength." "On these grounds," he says, "we resolved upon the measure; some obstructions, as we foresaw, were artfully thrown in the way of our scheme by those whom it affected, either in consequence or emolument; but, by a steady perseverance, we accomplished it almost as soon and as successfully as we wished." In subsequent dispatches the President details "the mischievous systems that had tended to involve the Zemindars in almost hopeless debt," and the remedies he proposed for relieving them from such practices in future. "Another cause," he says, "which has operated in no small degree to the distress of the Zemindars arises from the short term of the settlement with them. When the leases are so confined, it can never be expected that the cultivator will attend to the improvement of his land......This conduct is natural enough, if we consider how unsettled the ideas of these

people must be concerning the state of their property, after it has passed through such various changes, and the sovereignty transferred from the Soubah of the Deccan to the French, then back to the Soubah again, and, lastly, to the English; all in the course of a few years. These reflections, we think, must strike you forcibly with the necessity of falling upon a plan better adapted to give the Zemindars a firm confidence in your Government, and to convince them that you wish to obtain no more than an equitable revenue from their estates, leaving the remainder to be enjoyed by themselves in security, and free from all other exactions......For this purpose it is necessary to extend the term of their leases......We are convinced of the peculiar propriety of it at this juncture, in a political point of view. Without the confidence and attachment of the Zemindars, we cannot depend upon the strength of your forces for the security of the Circars, were they to be disturbed by any of the country powers, or by the French, who have clearly the design of gaining a footing there." And again he writes, in a letter of later date, "In our former dispatch you were made acquainted with the particular settlements made with the Zemindars. This, we are convinced, is as high as the country will bear; and it will require prudent management, with a careful attention to the redress of former grievances, to receive even this with punctuality, adding to it the large arrears that are due. We have also stated to you the infinite trouble it cost us to lay down the necessary regulations for the Cicacole Circar, and to effect a reconciliation between the two brothers. We proceed now to submit to you such of our subsequent Resolutions relative to the other Zemindars as we deem most worthy of your attention.......It is our opinion that every good consequence will result from the interposition of this Government in the disputes of the Zemindars. At first we imagined that it would be to them a more agreeable mode of decision if we referred it to arbitration, and with that purpose we selected such as from their characters we were led to suppose would not be obnoxious to either side; but they declined to arbitrate. The weight, therefore, of this heavy business fell upon us; and

we are happy at last to have brought it to a conclusion. They are now returned to their country perfectly satisfied; and, we flatter ourselves, we may venture to look forward that the balances of the Company will be regularly discharged, that the Zemindars will maintain a good understanding among themselves, and that their complaints, if not absolutely removed, will be less frequent than they have hitherto been."

That the Council of Madras had a thorough understanding of the cause of the reluctance said to be manifested by the Zemindars to attend the summons they had received, appears plainly from the following Minute of the President. (See Evidences, p. 232.)

"Having attentively perused the letter from Masulipatam, I shall offer a few remarks upon the consultations.......The conduct of the chief, Mr. Sadleir, in inquiry into the state of the factory, the balances due, the causes for the non-payment of the Zemindars, &c., was certainly very proper and necessary. Having gone thus far, nothing more was wanting than to direct the Zemindars to repair to the Presidency, and to have endeavoured to prevail upon them to pay some part of their balances before their departure. The letter written by the chief, to accompany that written by me to the Zemindars, seems to enter more into the business than there was any occasion for. He says:—'In future you will know that it is the intention of the Governor and Council to settle the annual rent of your several districts at the Presidency.' This, in some degree, implies that they were annually to repair here; which might be a great discouragement to them, and I believe is not the intention of any member of this Board; but to settle with them for some length of time, and on such a footing as may prevent such heavy balances in future as are now due from them, and to relieve them from every oppression and undue influence...... There is one part of the extracts of the consultations of the 20th of April that demands our particular notice. They agree to 'apprize the Zemindars of what will be expected from them, on their arrival at Madras,' without our ever having made known to them our expectations, or the plan we intended to pursue, as

they particularly make use of the following expressions: 'To find means during their absence to pay into the treasury here such money as would otherwise have been received from them, had not the business been transferred to the Presidency.' These expressions are certainly ill-considered. They give the Zemindars an opportunity of making use of the same *finesse*, in excuse for not paying what is due from them; and, accordingly, Rajah Tripetty Kauze, in his answer to the chief's letter, dwells upon that part, and adds to it, on mentioning his balance, 'The Company would have received that money to this time.'......At the conclusion of their consultations on the 2nd of May, they gave up all hopes of receiving any part of the balances due, previous to the departure of the Zemindars for Madras, without any one good reason offered.......I am persuaded, from the great balances due, the Zemindars might, by good management, be induced to pay amongst them such a sum, though not the whole of their debts, as would supply the exigencies of the factory during their absence, which at most will not be above two months."

It remains to add that in seventeen letters, written after the Court of Directors had been made acquainted with the whole of the details respecting the Zemindars, not the slightest disapprobation was manifested. On some of the measures proposed, for correcting a system which had caused the Zemindars to be almost hopelessly involved in debt, the Directors comment approvingly. (See Evidences, pp. 203, 235.)

Extract of letter from the Directors to Fort St. George:—

"It is with great concern we read your account of the distressed state of the Zemindars, and of the causes assigned for such distress.......We much approve your idea of fixing the future periods of payment at such times of the year as shall enable the Zemindars to realize the produce of their lands, without being under the necessity of continuing the destructive practice of borrowing money on the terms to which they have hitherto been subject. We hope the mode of relief will be adequate to the purposes intended. We have, therefore, only to enjoin you to take care that our indulgence be not abused, but

that the rents be duly paid, according to stipulations to be made with the Zemindars, and not otherwise."

To prove that the collection of revenues, so far from being impeded, was improved, the Counsel called Mr. Wright, Treasurer of Madras, who proved an increase of revenue from the Circars of, first year, £100,000, second year, £128,900. (See Evidences, p. 35.)

Sir Thomas Rumbold's summary of facts, in regard to one part of his relations with the subordinate factories, is too important to be omitted here.

"How far the honour of the Presidency may be concerned to remove the other imputation thrown upon them in this part of the Report, of having generally disregarded the information afforded by the subordinate factories, (Second Report, p. 19,) the public is in a situation to determine. In what degree the Presidency may have merited the particular reprehension inflicted on them, in the present instance, by the Secret Committee, for neglecting 'the strong representations made by the gentlemen of Ganjam against the agreement with Ball Kistnah,' (*ibid.*,) will appear from the following facts."

"In the year 1778, (the year immediately following the boasted restoration of the revenue, during the chiefship of Mr. Smith,) the whole collections, including a variety of old balances, as well as what could be obtained of the current tribute, fell short of the amount of the simple yearly revenne, as stated in the Report, by a sum considerably exceeding one third. In the following year (1779) the whole mass of these mixed collections did not amount to one half of the expected simple revenue of the year. So rapid a decline of the revenue did not fail to excite in my mind a serious alarm, not unmixed with suspicion. It is true the collections of the current year's account had only been continued to the end of February. (See Ganjam cash accounts on the Company's records; see also my Minute, Appendix, Second Report, No. 60.) But the account

finishes in April, and the collections of the two remaining months could not possibly be considerable. In the mean time the expenses of the establishment were absorbing the whole produce of the collections. (See my Minutes, Appendix, Second Report, Nos. 60, 61.) I determined to attempt an immediate reform; but upon the first rumour of this intention—to the astonishment of every member of the Council, without exception—the gentlemen of Ganjam remitted an account to the Presidency of a pretended collection during the two least productive months, equal to all the preceding produce of the year. A daring imposition, destitute even of the degree of plausibility which is required in fiction. So gross an artifice could not deceive for an instant. But the Presidency proceeded with caution; and it was not until a direct confession was received from the chief himself that the gentlemen of Ganjam were removed from their stations. (See Ganjam accounts on the records of the Company for that period.)"

"This is by no means the only instance of prevarication of which the gentlemen of Ganjam stand convicted; yet it is ranked among the foremost of my offences, that I did not consent to be governed by the 'representations of those gentlemen.' Yet the evidence of those convicted gentlemen, and of the gentlemen of the other subordinates, and of Mr. Smith and Mr. Johnson, who had themselves been chiefs of subordinates, all actuated by the same passions; all, though in different degrees, urged by the same spirit of resentment, and biassed by the same sense of an immediate personal interest, in fixing a general odium upon my conduct, and in discrediting the greater part of the measures of my administration; yet, I say, the evidence such as I have stated it,—the evidence of witnesses who might fairly be challenged on the trial of a common issue in Westminster Hall,*—this evidence is the sole foundation not

* "It is by no means my intention to impeach generally the characters of gentlemen who have served in the subordinate Councils. I only assert that interested parties would not be admitted as witnesses in a court of justice.

"It may be necessary to make one additional remark before quitting

only of all the calumny which has been so busily employed to prejudice my character in the world; but, what is more serious and affecting, of all the charges and imputations which seem to have received the sanction of the Secret Committee.

"Such are the grounds upon which 'it has been thought proper to advert to my private transactions;' to explore and to publish to the world the minutest circumstances of my affairs; and to call upon my confidential agents and friends to betray the secrets of their trust."

this subject. 'No balances were paid,' the Report says, 'but teeps (or draughts) granted for pagodas.' The revenue is never paid but by soucars' (or bankers') bills, called teeps. I could not alter the established mode, but I objected to it. See my Minute, Appendix, Second Report, No. 49. It will be sufficient to remark here that the revenue was raised, under my administration, in two of the great divisions of the Circars, and raised as high as the countries would bear. In the third district, which was absolutely ruined, I laid the foundation of a real production."

APPENDIX B.

(*See Page* 47.)

MINUTES AND OFFICIAL LETTERS BY SIR EYRE COOTE, SIR THOMAS RUMBOLD, AND MR. HASTINGS.

AT A SELECT COMMITTEE, JANUARY, 1779.

MINUTE OF THE PRESIDENT.

"THE arrival of Sir Eyre Coote at this Presidency, on his way to Bengal, at so critical a juncture, I esteem on many accounts a fortunate circumstance: he will be able to form a judgment, from his own observation, of your real situation, with respect to resources, and the conduct both of the Nabob and the Rajah of Tanjore. And I most earnestly recommend to him to take a view of our proceedings, both before and since the capture of Pondicherry, that he may be fully acquainted with the difficulties we have had, and still have, to struggle with; that, when he takes his place at the Council General of Bengal, he may, from his own knowledge, make such representations, that we may be supported and assisted by the opinion of that Board, in any measure we may be obliged to adopt for the public good, and the preservation of the Carnatic.......We have now an empty treasury. It is true the Nabob has promised a considerable sum this month, and to be more regular in his payments in future, but we have no other security but

his word; should he fail us, as he has seldom been very punctual in his engagements, I apprehend the most serious consequences. It is absolutely necessary to act with spirit and vigour, to obtain money from those channels from which it ought to flow, and by a determined plan of economy, and reduction of all expense, to endeavour to supply our treasury. To accomplish this necessary point, I have no doubt of meeting with the concurrence and steady support of the Committee: and I propose that an auditor of accounts may be immediately appointed, that he proceed to examine all accounts, civil and military, for the last six months: or, if it should be thought too great a task for one person, that two persons be appointed, one to audit the civil, the other the military accounts, and that all unnecessary charges be struck off; and that they make a report to the Committee, or Council, every fortnight, of the progress they have made; and that their allowance, or emolument, depend, in a great measure, on the reduction they have made in the monthly expenses. It would appear extraordinary at the commencement of a war to propose a reduction of our military force; it would, at this juncture, be undoubtedly highly improper and dangerous; but I do not hesitate to give it as my opinion, that our establishment is too great for our resources; and either a fixed or certain revenue from the Carnatic, or Tanjore country, must be allotted for the payment of our troops, or a considerable reduction must take place at a more favourable period.......

"We have represented to Bengal our situation: we have acquainted them in a former letter that, if we did not receive a supply, we should be under the necessity of drawing upon Europe. The Council General were, however, unable to supply us; I will not say unwilling, being convinced the co-operations with the different Presidencies, for the mutual support of the Company's possessions, is the first and most material object of their political conduct.......

"The seas are covered with powerful fleets.......What if the French grand fleet should oblige ours to retire for a season, where then will be our hopes of a reinforcement? Shall we then, with empty treasury, be enabled to provide for the neces-

sities of a commencing war? or will the Nabob's generosity then keep pace with our wants?......

"The next consideration to supplying our treasury is, to form such alliances as may secure us from any attempts, if our endeavours with respect to money should not succeed.......Our correspondence with Hyder has not been attended with that readiness on his part which we expected from him; but I am persuaded we should not lose sight of the object, and nothing will so effectually bring it about as sending a person to him, &c., &c.''......

Letter from Sir Eyre Coote to the Chairman of the East India Company, dated Fort St. George, January 18th, 1779:—

"Gentlemen,—

"The intelligence I had from a Dutch ship determined me, instead of going to Bombay, to proceed hither directly, where I imagined my services might be more immediately necessary. But I had the pleasure to find everything in a state of present peace and security upon the coast, from the wise and spirited exertions of the Governor and Council here, in support of the army.......I wish I could give as favourable an opinion of the proceedings of the Presidencies of Bengal and Bombay: but it appears to me that they ought, at this critical time, to have united against the national enemy, and given due assistance to this settlement, which has hitherto borne the whole burden of the war; instead of which, a large army is sent from Bengal, at an immense expense, into the heart of the country, where, if I can judge from the information I have received, they can produce nothing but distress to the Company, not to say dishonour to the nation, whether successful or otherwise; and Bombay is left defenceless, by sending their whole force upon a Mahratta expedition; which, besides the danger to which they are exposed, brings upon us the inconvenience of transporting troops from hence to Mahé, the attack upon which ought naturally to have fallen upon the settlement, so nearly in its neighbourhood. Indeed, I may say, the sending troops upon this expedition is

rather calculated for the security of Bombay in its present weak state, than any great prospect of success we have against Mahé, as I am apt to suppose Hyder Ali will interfere in defending that place against any attempts we may make upon it. However, it is determined no risks shall be run, as they are to wait at Anjengo, in readiness either to pursue the plan against Mahé, if advisable, or to embark for the defence of Bombay, if necessary.

"I have reviewed several of your corps since my arrival here, and can assure you with much pleasure that they are brought to a perfection I could hardly have an idea of in this country. Your artillery is equal to anything in Europe; and nothing is left for us to wish for but an addition of numbers to both. The officers merit everything that can be said in their praise, for the unwearied pains they have taken to bring the troops to the state they are now in.......

"I have the honour to be, &c.,

"Eyre Coote."

Extract from Sir Eyre Coote's Minute before leaving Madras for Bengal, February 4th, 1779:—

"I agree entirely with the Governor's proposition, in regard to the necessity there is for representing to the Supreme Council the state of our treasury, and the situation of the Tanjore country, as well as to require their sentiments upon the measures which the Board here ought to adopt, in case the Nabob's engagements are not so punctually fulfilled as the necessity of our affairs may demand; and I imagine those representations cannot fail of having the desired effect, in inducing them to give such speedy and proper assistance, as may enable the Governor and Council here to pursue the disinterested and spirited plan which they have hitherto supported alone, so much to the national benefit and to their own honour."

Letter from Fort St. George to the Governor-General and Council of Bengal, February 26th, 1779 :—

"Honourable Sir and Sirs,

"We have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th ultimo, to which we mean now particularly to reply. We have not yet formally required of the Nabob an account of his private debts, nor do we conceive (though we shall apply for it) that it will be possible to obtain from him the particulars of all he owes to individuals.......He has, indeed, acquired in his hands, by degrees, a very considerable share of the property belonging to individuals in the settlement, Europeans and natives ; and from the plan he has invariably pursued, of borrowing as much as he can, and paying as little as he can, his debt continues to swell daily, and threatens by its enormity to become a perpetual encumbrance upon the Carnatic. With respect to any arrangement made by the Nabob for the payment of his private debts.—In the month of December, 1777, he communicated to us a copy of an agreement which he said he had made with his private creditors, and proposed carrying into execution under the sanction of the Company's government ; but not having, at the time he communicated his arrangements to us, entered into any specification of his debts, and not having ourselves any means of ascertaining them, we forbore giving our sanction to the liquidation, or taking any other part than to insist on the Nabob's performance of his engagements to the Company, prior to the adjustment of any other claims. The Nabob, we believe, has so far taken advantage of our firmness in that respect, as to make it a pretence for neglecting his private creditors entirely, at the same time that he has not paid that regard to the Company which might have been expected from him. On the contrary, there are good grounds to conclude that while the Company's demands are made to stand between him and his private creditors, he will be always glad of that pretence to keep the latter at a distance ; and if he succeed in that object, there cannot be a stronger motive with him for continuing in the Company's debt for

ever.......We received a formal engagement from the Nabob in the month of July last to pay a large sum of money before the end of April following;......he has fallen monthly in arrears, and reduced us to the greatest distress.......We mention these circumstances which have occurred, with many others of the same nature, to show how extremely we are embarrassed in our resources, without having the least power to extricate ourselves."

"We are charged with the defence of the Carnatic, and maintain a very large military establishment for that purpose, without possessing in our hands the means of paying it, or having a shadow of control over the resources of the country which we are to defend.......We may use firm language to those who are bound to assist us, and fail in doing so; but representations, remonstrances, and even threats, as we have already experienced, may prove unsuccessful, and leave us without any resource when our affairs are at the brink of ruin."

"We hope you will be pleased to take this subject again into consideration; and if it shall appear clearly to you, as it does to us, that we have no power within ourselves to remedy the evil which we complain of, we hope you will favour us with your opinion, in express terms, and give us the sanction of your authority, as far as it extends, to enable us to supply the defects of our present system. The difficulties we experience, with respect to the Nabob, may be comprised in a few words. We sustain a very considerable expense monthly on his account; we have nothing to trust to for reimbursements but monthly promises, which may or may not be performed. If they be performed, we are able to make the necessary advances for the ensuing month; if they be not performed, we instantly find ourselves involved in the greatest distress. In such alarming situations, what course can we take to procure relief? We shall now beg leave to make some observations, by way of reply to your remarks upon the estimate of receipts and disbursements for the present year, which we had the honour to send you with our letter of the 7th of December.

"You remark, first, that it appears by the said estimate, that we had, on the 1st of November last, a balance of one lac of

pagodas in our treasury, and that we stated a surplus in the course of the year of 189,887 pagodas, after deducting all the probable charges of our Presidency, &c. You then go on to observe, 'The amount at which you estimate the expedition against Mahé is only three lacs of pagodas. It appears, therefore, by the statement, that you will have a sufficiency to answer this sum.'......

"In judging of our demands and resources from the estimate we furnished you with, we conceive that particular attention must be had to the periods at which they are stated; whereby only a just opinion can be formed of our wants, and the means of answering them as they occur. We stated the expense of the expedition against Mahé, which was a service immediately to be provided for, at three lacs of pagodas. To answer this sum you bring the balance in our treasury on the 1st of November of one lac of pagodas, without allotting any part for our other necessary disbursements, and add to it the probable balance of near two lacs of pagodas, which we stated as a surplus which might arise in the course of this year, without taking notice at the same time of the peishcush due, and to become due, in this year to the Nizam, which is mentioned at the foot of the account, and which will amount to more than that surplus. Again, you observe that our estimate was formed from the actual disbursements of last year, when we had a larger force in the field than that which we proposed to send to Mahé. Upon referring to the estimate, and to our letters on this subject, we do not find it anywhere expressed that our estimate was formed upon the actual disbursements of last year. On the contrary, we have been studious to show that our calculations were framed wholly on a peace establishment; and we have particularly noticed it in the estimate itself......

"You acquaint us that, in case our resources should be affected by internal hostilities, your aid might be granted in time to prevent any embarrassment to the service; and you repeat, also, what you urged in a former letter, that, in the event of a siege or any other sudden emergency, we should experience no difficulty in raising money by bills on your Government.

"While our situation is such that we depend on the monthly receipts and collections to answer the monthly disbursements, such a failure as that you mentioned might plunge us into insurmountable difficulties. A certainty of aid at the distance of two months only would not relieve us. We are likewise apprehensive that in case of any sudden emergency which might oblige us again to put our army in the field, we should find it extremely difficult, if not impracticable, from the scarcity of specie, to raise a sufficient sum for bills on you......

"The conduct of the Rajah of Tanjore has of late been very blameable, and inconsistent with the great obligations he is under to the Company. He attends to no kind of business himself; and his government is administered by a man who gives daily proofs of his want of integrity or want of capacity for such a trust. The revenues are certainly embezzled or misapplied; otherwise it could never be, that, with a country so rich and so unencumbered as Tanjore, the Rajah should apparently live in want, and still fall in arrear to the Company, which he has of late done, even in the payment of his subsidy. We have over and over again represented to him how grossly he is deceived by the impositions of his minister; and employed every argument to persuade him to dismiss so incapable and unfaithful a servant. We lately deputed General Munro to Tanjore, chiefly with a view to effecting that point; but the Rajah's blind attachment to the minister prevailed. We therefore instructed General Munro to insist on the Rajah's giving security for the present year's subsidy, with three lacs remaining to be paid of the deposit money; leaving it, however, to the General's discretion, if he thought these sums too heavy for the revenue of this year, after providing for the Rajah's expenses, to abate one lac of the deposit money, and carry it to the account of the next year......We intended closing our letter in this place; but, having received some important news relative to the designs of Hyder Ali, we lose not a moment in communicating it to you," &c.

Extracts from letters to the Directors, from Fort St. George :—

March 13th, 1779.

"THE military operations against the French in India having hitherto been confined to this Presidency, and there appearing a great probability that the enemy will direct their future efforts so as to make the coast of Coromandel the principal seat of the present war, we have judged it expedient to represent fully and freely to the Council of Bengal how we are circumstanced in regard to the means necessary to enable us to act with that vigour which will naturally be expected from the strength of our military establishment. We have shown that the resources of money from the Carnatic are far from being adequate to a state of war, and that, being entirely under the control of the powers who hold possession of the country, we can have no dependence upon them, and must continue to feel every sort of embarrassment in providing for the common exigencies of the public service. From this view of our situation, we inferred the necessity of our being timely supported by them with such a fund from the Bengal treasury as might enable us, in case of any sudden and extraordinary emergency, to answer the heavy demands requisite for putting our army in motion... The Governor General and Council of Bengal admit 'that the public funds in their hands are intended as a resource to be appropriated to the defence of all the Company's possessions, in the degree that they may respectively require it;' but they observe that the occasion should be obviously urgent to warrant such an appropriation ; and they observe that, in the event of a siege, or any sudden and imminent necessity, we should experience no difficulty in raising money by bills on their Government......We are of opinion that, if the surplus revenue of Bengal be intended as a fund for the benefit of the Company's possessions in general, each Presidency, and particularly in time of war, should have such a share of the fund as may be proportioned to the extraordinary demand which may come upon it; and that share, whatever it may be, should be held as a sacred deposit, and reserved only for pressing exigencies.

"We hope you will be pleased to take this subject fully under your consideration, and pursue such measures as shall seem expedient to you in consequence."

October 14th, 1779.

"The very heavy expenses occasioned by the siege of Pondicherry, the maintenance of the French prisoners, the fitting out an expedition to so distant a place as Mahé, the demolition of the fortifications of Pondicherry, and the providing cartel ships to carry to France and the islands the French military and civil officers, whom we were obliged to remove from India, have drained your treasury so much, that we have been reduced to the necessity of requiring supplies of money from Bengal to carry on your affairs. In the month of April, the Governor General and Council, upon our repeated applications, promised to assist us with fifteen lacs of rupees; and in consequence we received in June and July ten lacs of this supply, which were of great service to us; but the remaining five lacs, which the gentlemen of Bengal promised to forward to us in August, have not been sent, nor can we now receive them at any rate before the month of January. This disappointment is very distressing to us, because at this season of the year little or nothing is collected from the country, and it is difficult to obtain supplies from any quarter. There is but very small vend for imports from Europe, which used to produce a considerable supply of money; and we have no assistance to expect from drafts on England, though we beg leave to represent that these drafts usually formed an annual resource, without which the expenses of this Presidency could not be provided for. In the month of January, we flatter ourselves, if no troubles arise, and we receive our promised supply of money from Bengal, that we shall be able to provide for the necessary disbursements of the Company, and we shall not fail to reduce these within as small a compass as possible."

From Fort St. George to the Directors, January, 1779.

"We have set on foot the proposed expedition against Mahé, and shall prosecute it to the utmost of our ability.

"The heavy expense incurred, and to be incurred, by our present expedition, which is formed solely on our own strength, bears much too heavily on the scanty resources of this Government; nor is it possible for us, without considerable foreign aid, to carry on your affairs successfully in times of war. It has often been represented, and we beg leave here again to repeat, that the system of *connexion* adopted, both with respect to the Nabob and the King of Tanjore, appears to us extremely defective and insecure. Your engagements with them extend to the defence and protection of their whole dominions; yet you have stipulated only for what is sufficient to reimburse the ordinary charges on this account in time of peace."......

LETTERS AND EXTRACTS BEARING ESPECIALLY ON THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY AND THE NABOB.

Letter from the Governor of Madras to the Nabob, December 10th, 1778:—

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HIGHNESS,

"THE late agreement enclosed by you for discharging your old balance, and the arrears into which you had fallen in the payments of last year, together with the growing charges until the 30th of April next, was formed with the view chiefly to your own convenience; and from the satisfaction which Your Highness expressed, and the solemn promises pledged, I had every reason to expect that no one payment could have been left undischarged, after it became due. How these promises have been observed is well known to Your Highness.......I am sorry to be obliged to write so strongly upon this subject: the necessity of the case must plead my excuse.

"What I would now propose as the means of preventing, in

some degree, the disappointments to which the Company are daily exposed, is, that *Your Highness should set apart the revenues of particular districts to answer the amount of your engagements to the Company*, and allow one of the gentlemen in the Company's service to reside on the spot, and receive the collections from the hands of your manager, without interfering, in any respect whatever, in the business of the country. I hope this proposal will be agreeable to Your Highness; and, if it be properly carried into execution, I am convinced that it will save you a great deal of trouble, and free me from the uneasiness I now suffer, and the disagreeable necessity of applying so frequently to Your Highness on the subject of money.

"Before I conclude this letter, I think it my duty to observe that your payments have hitherto been made chiefly in Soucar bills: this is, in fact, giving very little, if any, relief to the Company, for the bills are not paid as they become due; and the Soucars allege in excuse, that they cannot discharge them without first receiving the means from Your Highness. I had occasion once before to mention this kind of bills: and I must again declare, that I cannot in future take anything in payment but ready money, or good bills, payable in two or three days, and the amount of which I can be sure of receiving punctually. ......At this moment our treasury is quite bare. We have one resource, which is drawing bills upon England; but if we should be driven to the necessity of adopting a measure for which we have no authority, the only reason we can give for it is, the failure of Your Highness's engagements to the Company."

To show the good effect of these exertions, may be quoted Fort St. George's letter to the Directors, March 13th, 1779. (Extract.)

"We have the pleasure to acquaint you that the Nabob, in consequence of our several representations, has nearly completed his balance to the end of January, and promises to discharge what is due for February in a few days."

With which may be compared the following Extract, dated October 14th, 1779.

"We have furnished the Nabob with a paragraph of your letter, which makes provision for the payment of the sums advanced on his account. This is a subject which we have ourselves often pressed upon him, but hitherto without success; and the reason is this: the only effectual provision which the Nabob can make for reimbursing your payments on his account is, to assign districts of sufficient value, and to put them entirely under our management. Now it is certain the Nabob is extremely averse to every proposal of this kind; and we are assured, from an apprehension, though he has never expressed it to us, that some encroachments might be made on his rights, and the Company by degrees acquire a sovereignty within his own territories, of which he has always been extremely jealous. If the exigencies of the service did not compel us to have recourse to the Nabob monthly, there would be little occasion for such a constant provision as we now require; since the Nabob, though not punctual to his monthly stipulations, has generally been found to exert himself in discharging, within the year, the full engagements for that term. In the last year we were frequently obliged to press him in very strong terms for money, yet he paid more in that year than he had done in the same period for some time before. With respect to his engagements for the present year, he has been tolerably regular; and there is only due from him, including the sums advanced for the demolitions of Pondicherry, about fifty thousand pagodas. In these engagements he has, besides providing for the current charges, agreed to pay one hundred and sixty thousand pagodas on account of his debt, and one lac on account of the expedition to Pondicherry, which he took upon himself." (Evidences, pp. 328, 329.)

On the first intimation of the danger of an invasion, Sir Thomas Rumbold urged the Nabob to provide resources, and to

give an account of the stores and provisions in his different garrisons.

Letter to the Nabob from the Governor, dated February 25th, 1779:—

"May it please Your Highness,

"I have had the honour to receive Your Highness' several letters of intelligence, relative to the motions and designs of Hyder Ali, and I beg leave to return you many thanks for your early communication of it. Should Hyder make any attempt to enter the Carnatic, and disturb the tranquillity of the country, we shall certainly take every precaution in our power for its security. The first and most material thing to be considered is, a proper supply of money for the expenses of our army, which may be obliged to take the field. I am no less amazed than concerned to hear from Your Highness, before even the approach of danger, and before you have lost a grain of your revenues, that you are totally without resources for the protection of your own dominions, which have been ten years in profound peace. This is a discouraging circumstance to the Company, who entertain so large a force for the defence of the Carnatic, trusting to your engagements, and to the natural resources of the country for the necessary funds, both in peace or war. I am willing to suppose that Your Highness' declaration of inability to supply money or troops to oppose the incursions of an enemy proceeded hastily from the first impressions, caused by the report of Hyder's intentions, and not from a deliberate review of your situation. To believe the Carnatic in so weak a state as Your Highness represents by that declaration, would be to reflect severely on your government, and to judge you incapable of that prudent foresight which prompts every wise prince to be upon his guard against the worst that can happen.......What can be said in answer to Your Highness' plea of poverty, and want of resources, when at the most fruitful season of the year, and at the period when you seemed not yourself to entertain a doubt of your being able to satisfy all the Company's demands.......If we observed any money issued to

your private creditors, or anything extraordinary to your troops, we might in some measure account for the deficiency; but knowing as we do that your creditors, new and old, have received nothing, or next to nothing, and that your troops are all in arrears, we are totally at a loss to account for the expenditure of your revenues. Your Highness will be so good as to excuse the freedom of these remarks, which arise naturally out of the subject of the Company's distress for money, and the causes to which it may be attributed.

"Soon after my arrival here, I wrote repeatedly to Your Highness for accounts of the provisions and stores laid up in your different garrisons, but never could obtain them. If the Carnatic be invaded, we shall, without these accounts, be totally at a loss how to take our measures. With regard to your troops, under proper regulations they might be of essential service; and I hope and request, therefore, that Your Highness will see them regularly paid, and well appointed for service; in their present situation, there is great reason to apprehend that Hyder, were he to enter the Carnatic, might be able to draw the whole, or the greatest part, to his standard.

"I have the honour to be, &c."

"*Fort St. George*,
"*February* 25*th*, 1779."

Letter to the Nabob from the Governor, May 21st, 1779:—

"I HAVE received Your Highness' several letters, acquainting me with the motions of Hyder Ali, the particulars of his conquests in the Cuddapah country, his intentions against Kinnoul, Adoni, and Raychoor, and lately, his determination to invade the Circars and the Carnatic. I am obliged to Your Highness for the intelligence you have sent me, and I am confident that the means you recommended are suggested no less by your regard for the welfare of the Company than by your desire to subdue a power which is become so formidable to the Carnatic. Although, from the intelligence which has come in to us, we had great reason to expect an immediate invasion from Hyder; yet

I have now the pleasure to acquaint Your Highness that Hyder has suddenly retired from the Cuddapah country, and is marching towards Seringapatam. The cause of his departure, it is said, proceeds from the approach of a large body of Mahrattas towards his country; though, possibly, it may have been occasioned by the disturbances on the Malabar Coast, where the Rajahs tributary to Hyder have taken up arms, and besieged the fort of Callicut. Thus, for the present, the threatened danger is removed, without having recourse to the alliances proposed by Your Highness; but as the late proceedings of Hyder, both towards the Compan and Your Highness, may possibly lead to a war with him, I think it highly necessary that we should know beforehand what resources we can depend on for conducting it; and here I can have no doubt, from the earnest manner in which Your Highness has been pleased to recommend us to unite with the Soubah and the Mahrattas, in a general attack on Hyder, even before he has invaded us, that you have well weighed the extent of such an undertaking, and considered the vast sums that will be required to execute it. I may, therefore, with confidence, request Your Highness will inform me what provision you have made, and whether we can depend upon you for the extraordinary supplies that will be required on this occasion." (Evidences, p. 468.)

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.

(*See page* 31.)

"BUT the change of relation between these two gentlemen is not so striking as the total difference of their deportment under the same unhappy circumstances. Whatever the merits of the worthy Baronet's defence might have been, he did not shrink from the charge. He met it with manliness of spirit and decency of behaviour. What would have been thought of

him if he had held the present language of his old accuser? When articles were exhibited against him by that right honourable gentleman, he did not think proper to tell the House that we ought to institute no inquiry, to inspect no paper, to examine no witness. He did not tell us (what at that time he might have told us with some show of reason) that our concerns in India were matters of delicacy; that to divulge anything relative to them would be mischievous to the State. He did not tell us that those who would inquire into his proceedings were disposed to dismember the empire. He had not the presumption to say that, for his part, having obtained, in his Indian Presidency, the ultimate object of his ambition, his honour was concerned in executing with integrity the trust which had been legally committed to his charge; that others, not having been so fortunate, could not be so disinterested, and therefore their accusations could spring from no other source than faction, and envy to his fortune."

"Had he been frontless enough to hold such vain, vapouring language, in the face of a grave, a detailed, a specified matter of accusation, while he violently resisted everything which could bring the merits of his cause to the test; had he been wild enough to anticipate the absurdities of this day; that is, had he inferred, as his late accuser has thought proper to do, that he could not have been guilty of malversation in office, for this sole and curious reason, that he had been in office; had he argued the impossibility of his abusing his power on this sole principle, that he had power to abuse; he would have left but one impression on the mind of every man who heard him, and who believed him in his senses—that, in the utmost extent, he was guilty of the charge."

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